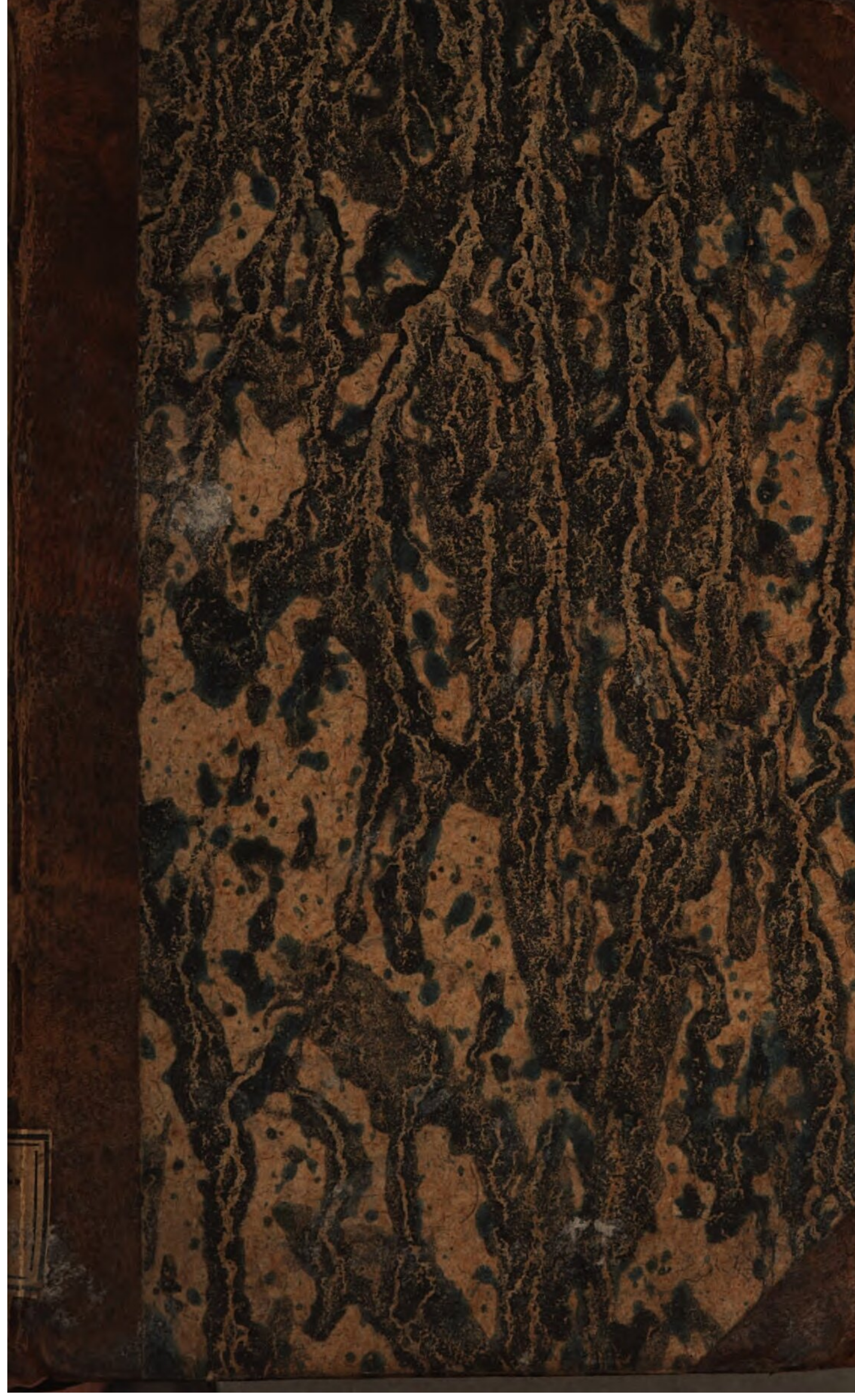




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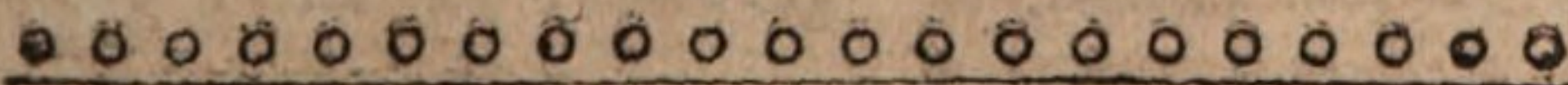
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ORIGINAL LETTERS.
A CORRESPONDENCE,
SENTIMENTAL, INSTRUCTIVE,
and
ENTERTAINING
Between
FREDERICK and FELICIA.



Altona,

Printed for Johann Heinrich Kaven,

MDCCXCVII.



AN INSTRUCTIVE

Preface.

Though, as the Editor merely, of a collection of *Original Letters*, can have but very little to say, because, their quality must chiefly recommend them, to the notice of those, who are competent judges of literary productions, and especially of the epistolary kind; yet, thus much may be allowed him to add: that he has not met with any of that nature, purport, or design, where *sentiment, criticism, morality, benevolence and charity*, together with *gravity and humour*, are so happily blended, as to afford satisfaction to every class of readers. Besides, style and diction are such, as may with propriety be recommended to all, who are wishing to make some proficiency in *Letter- Writing*,

not only in familiar correspondence, but also in the professional way, or line of trade. For, what can distinguish the man of true taste more, be he either a merchant, manufacturer, or any other tradesman whatever, than writing to his correspondents or others of his friends, though merely on business, in a clear and conspicuous manner? — Is it a privilege, a beauty, or a necessary requisite for the merchant, meaning *our English Merchants*, to jumble together a parcel of barbarous expressions, mutilated words, and incoherent phrases, rendered still more unintelligible, by the most shameful of all, bad spelling?

Abbreviations, should be used but sparingly, and not without necessity, or upon a pinch: for, can there be shewn more disrespect to a person, than writing to him in such a slovenly manner, as to become quite

quite unintelligible, and taking up his time with unraveling the meaning of a scrawl, which, had it been written properly, and distinctly, might have been conceived in a trice, and, probably, more to the satisfaction of all parties? — What serious consequences may be produced, by such a scrawl's falling into the hands of a litigious person, who may turn the sense of it into any shape, according as it may serve his interest, or any other villainous design, to the great detriment of the writer, or his employer, which is still worse?

It is hardly to be conceived, how the greater part of *School- and Writing-Masters*, are so lost to all sense of honour and integrity, as to tell their Scholars, that abbreviations superfluous strokes, and flourishes at the end of every word, are beauties, which they must endeavour to make them-

selfes master of, instead of cautioning them, to avoid such, as irregularities, vicious tricks, and indecencies. — But, as these gentlemen, for the greater part, are sorely tainted with pedantism, nay, some really are the greatest pedants imaginable, they seek a pride in every thing that is strange, and unintelligible. Thus, for instance: they new-model and disfigure the greater part of the letters of our alphabet, especially the capitals, and in such a manner, that the foreigner, by and by, will be obliged to submit to a regular course, of studying our letters, as the original proper distinction of them, will be entirely lost. It therefore behoves every gentleman, who professes teaching in any language, in case, he himself be not destitute of every sense of honour and decency, to keep a strict and watchful eye upon his scholars, and not suffer them to be hardened in such abuses as have been

men-

mentioned above, either by his conniving at, or sanctioning them; but, should these gentlemen be really so ignorant as to fancy, that abbreviations, almost in every word, and all the long f-'s, in the middle of words, to be written with *short ones*, &c. were real beauties, and that they highly promoted dispatch, then, indeed, it would be hard to bring order about again.

Our English *Merchants* and *Tradesmen*, are the chief cause of all this. Had they endeavoured, as every gentleman ought to do, to acquire a proper knowledge of their native tongue, instead of acquiring a dexterity, nay, even the mastership in low sayings, and vulgar expressions, not to mention here, that catalogue of vices, attendant on these acquisitions, they then would be able to afford useful examples to their foreign neighbours, instead of bad and corrupt-

ed ones. For instance: Bell, in his beautiful pocket edition of the *English Poets*, though, paper and letters are exquisitely fine, yet, by his introducing the small s, throughout, he has done an irreparable injury to the true orthography of our language, and, that merely from folly or pedantism: for, it is, „poison given in a golden cup:“ to foreigners in particular, who have no such a strict idea of what is right or wrong in our language; and therefore, being dressed up in so elegant a garb, they will be the sooner deluded and misled. But, more especially the Germans, who are honest, and sanguine in their pursuits, yet, it is to be pitied, that they, and especially the juvenile part of them, are such great lovers of what is strange, uncommon, and wonderful; so that whoever has insolence enough, of introducing any new whim, as some great and extraordinary improvement, they will
most

most eagerly catch at, defend it to the utmost, and thereby become the dupes of some *Puff*, or other. Just so it is with the introducing the small *s* into general writing: this is very favourable to some lazy young boobies, who hardly like to move their fingers, when it is said, they are writing; and, their scrawl, looks for all the world, as if some insect, by chance, had made such indented traces, because, their *m*, *n*, *r*, *s*, *t*, *c*, &c. seem so much alike, that the most skilful master in writing, is incapable of distinguishing them properly. What then is the foreigner to do in unraveling such a scrawl, though the contents may be to him of the utmost importance? — In one word, that sort of orthography, is hard to be read when printed, what must it be in bad writing! One thing more, I must remark: As the Germans have their own proper characters, for writing as well as for printing,

they render themselves still more ridiculous, by following an other manner of orthography, in writing with latin characters, as when they are writing with their own proper ones — A most unaccountable whim, indeed! —

Thus much, by way of digression, I have given my opinion, on a subject of importance. Whether the reader will consider it in that light, or in any other, is nothing to the purpose, and will detract nothing of its merit. The matter is clear, and will appear so to every person of sense and true learning. But, in how far, this matter may be a subject, fit for the preface to a collection of familiar letters, I shall not discuss here: suffice it, that, „conveying instruction,„ was the chief aim of.

The Editor.

ORI-

ORIGINAL LETTERS.

A CORRESPONDENCE,

Sentimental, Instructive, and

Entertaining.

Between

FREDERICK and FELICIA.

LETTER I.

FREDERICK To FELICIA.

Ever refined, and ever instructive, how shall I thank my Felicia for her last letter? Indeed, I rejoice at, and yet am ashamed of your superiority. Nature gave you an elegant mind; education has rendered it accomplished; but taste — so much talked of, and so little understood — taste, has distinguished you from others, who are also elegant and accomplished. For, I am not yet so much of a lover — I mean a Quixotic lover — as to insist that, *you alone*, are elegant

gant and accomplished: she must be fond of vulgar praise, and know but little of the world, who can suffer general and unmeaning adulation to approach her, in the form of a compliment. No, my dear Felicia, I have seen others elegant and accomplished; but in none have I discovered so much taste. „How do you mean?„ — Indeed, I can scarcely tell. Suppose, the different qualities of Venus, to have been allotted to a few favoured mortals? then I should suppose Lady T — had the neck; Mrs B — the lips; Lady F — the eye; Mrs M — the bosom — „Mercy on us! what! nothing allotted to me!„ — Yes, my love! to you, and to you only, has she given the *Cestus*! and in my mythology, the cestus of Venus, is neither more or less than, *exquisite taste and sensibility.*

I was distressed last night, with your situation at supper: that booby K — on one hand, and his superannuated aunt on the other: the former asking silly questions; and the latter, giving good advice! — a goose, instructing a nightingale to sing! I hope the old lady places her monitory injunctions among her works of *supererogation* — for, they were certainly needless.

Was not you charmed with the nephew's description of Ascot races? — Pardon me, I saw the tear start into your eye, when he mentioned the effects of the goading-spur — — unfeeling wretch! to call that *sport*! which derives its existence from lacerating the sides, and giving pain to an animal, which, in its kind, is so much more noble than himself! — And yet, Miss G —, was captivated with the relation, and lamented her absence from the *enchanting diversion*! —

What

What a miserable thing it is, to be obliged to endure the company of such people! — What a sacrifice of time, and of all that is dear, to unmeaning stupidity! — Surely, the hours are swiftly approaching, when *we* shall chuse *our* company, and banish the ridiculous ceremonies of life, for the inexpressible felicities of conjugal affection! — Adieu, my Felicia! Accelerate those hours, and complete the happiness of your.

FREDERICK.

LETTER II.

FELICIA To FREDERICK.

*H*ad I not a very favourable opinion of your sincerity, I should be much tempted, to renounce your correspondence. Indeed, Frederick, your letters abound in too many
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compliments, and, unless you sometimes sprinkle them with the salt of admonition, and animadversion, I am likely to become very vain; and then you will have to unsay, all that you have said. Beware of this, my good friend: it is by women as by patriots — adored this moment — execrated the next.

If ever that time shall arrive, in which we can „chuse our company, „ I fear we shall not be able, greatly to avail ourselves of the opportunity; for, where shall we find the associates you so much delight in? Our acquaintance is general, and yet, we know but two, to whose conversation you can attend, with any degree of patience: — so many tares, and so little wheat, in the *human crop* of this extensive field — the world!

I wish, your ideas, respecting general society, were not quite so elevated. You must doubtless experience more misery, than those of less cultivated understanding; for, every day some thing must occur to hurt your feelings. I am inclined to think, that, had you lived among the philosophers of Greece, you would have been a disciple of Heraclitus. — As all extremes lead to error, I am an enemy to both him and Democritus. I think it a great weakness, to weep for the generality of human frailty; and, an indubitable proof of an unfeeling mind, to laugh at it. — But what am I about? — Preaching to Frederick! This is, indeed, „A goose instructing a nightingale to sing!“, — Adieu!

FELICIA.

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LETTER III.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

No, my fair philosopher! — I have the happiness to correspond in sentiment more nearly with yourself, than decidedly to join in the broad grin of Democritus, or to unite my tears with those of the ever-weeping Heraclitus. — The follies of mankind are apt to excite my indignation; but their consequent calamities, can never form a subject of mirth in *my* mind; for, however deservedly those calamities may be inflicted, the remembrance of the cause, is lost in the effect, and every other sensation subsides in that of pity.

Surely, my dear Felicia, those hearts cannot be good, that can exult in human misery. — „And are there such?„ —

Alas! my sweet friend, had we not an in-

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stance, in the comments of all the H —— family, on the late misfortunes of M —— and his wife? — Fond of fashion in the extreme, and addicted to the indulgence of every elegant desire, M —— sought ruin itself with that precipitancy, with which it is shunned by others. We all saw his conduct, and we all knew the consequence. But how vain is the endeavour, to stem the torrent of dissipation! — And what is dissipation, but a weakness? — Was it generous then in the H —— family, to exult and to triumph over a man, reduced by the exercise of feelings, to which *they*, are utter strangers — in the indulgence of that taste, of which *they* have no conception? — You will, perhaps, in some measure, excuse their reflections, as the effusions of ignorance? No! inhumanity is the offspring — and the most diabolical offspring — of pride. Exultation over misery,

ery, the exercise of cruelty, in whatever sphere it is shewn, most frequently takes place to evince superiority, and to arrogate a claim to an exemption from evils, by the pretended possession of peculiar prudence, and economical virtue: when all that prudence, and all that virtue, originate in a constitutional coldness; in having no eye for beauty, no ear for harmony, no heart for those feelings, which, if they sometimes appear as weaknesses, in the opinion of men, have the sanction of virtues in the judgment of angels.

Do not then accuse me of singularity in my temper, when my whole attention is directed to acquire such a disposition; and such habits of thinking, as distinguish my lovely Felicia, and render her mind the seat of the graces, and her heart the residence of that tranquillity, which is the happy

result of innocence, and the first recompense of conscious virtue.

However my feelings may be hurt, by the follies of some, and the vices of others, your goodness, my dear girl, compensates for all these common disturbers of repose: the power of others to wound, can not equal that of yours, to heal: continue then to infuse into my mind, the spirit of that exquisite philosophy, which constitutes your chief felicity, and endears you so much to the heart of

Your

FREDERICK.

LETTER III.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

I Cannot but thank you for your last letter, though I do not altogether subscribe to some
of

of your conclusions. Your attachment to the polite arts, and the natural generosity of your disposition, lead you, I conceive, into some errors of opinion, which, being the immediate dictates of the heart, your cooler judgment would probably condemn.

I as sincerely pity the H — family as you can do; nor am I less exasperated, at the illiberal censures of the persons alluded to in your letter; but I cannot immediately from thence, draw the bold conclusion, that, „dissipation is a venial weakness.” No, my dear friend, dissipation is the demon of the present day, to whose influence, we must attribute all the infelicities, that prevail in the high and middling classes of life. — It is true, that many pursuits of modern dissipation, are in themselves, not only free from guilt, but, perhaps, amiable; yet, the attachment to them, may

be too strong, and tend to the rejection, or the neglect of more material concerns. And in this, there is a kind of self-deception: so long as our pursuits are innocent, our own hearts plead for them, without reflecting, that a dedication of ourselves, and of an unproportionable share of our time and substance, to amusement, or even to the acquisition, of what cannot but appear amiable in our estimation, may, and commonly does, lead to consequences, that involve in them, not only the ruin of ourselves, but of others, and thus incur a double portion of guilt.

It is a deception of this kind, which may fit them for these spheres of life, in which they are never likely to appear; an education, which renders the mind like a toyshop, full of very pretty and very useless things, leaving the hand idle, the heart

vacant of principle, and the soul a prey to dissipation. Yet, the worthy parent does all this, with the best intention in the world: that of making his children amiable, and of promoting their happiness by intellectual attainment; but there are species of mental acquisition, adapted to every different situation in life; and can any thing be more ridiculously absurd, than giving a tradesman's daughter, the education of a countess? — Such, however, is the prevailing folly of this „enlightened age,„ it robs the middling, that is, the most respectable part of the community, of solid comfort, fills the metropolis with a sort of splendid misery, and the gazettes with bankrupts.

Now, to take a view of those ranks of life, of which these are the imitators — but, come! — I will give you a respite,

and we will talk of this when we meet, —
 for, shall I not see you to-morrow? —
 Till to-morrow, then, adieu!

FELICIA,

LETTER V.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

Your hasty departure from town, very much alarmed me for the health of that honourable lady, your mother, till I received your letter, dated at Northampton, by which I am happy to find, that my fears were vain. — As it is the pleasantest, part of the Autumn, you will probably stay in the country, till the winter sets in; and, indeed, I envy you the felicity of a rural residence, during the present season, which, to me, is a season, equally charming as
 the

the spring, though it excites very different sensations. — I think it a great happiness, to have been educated in the country: to have passed my early years, in the bosom of retirement; and yet, I trust, that my predilection in favour of it, arises more from sentiment than habit. — With what delight have I wandered up the hill, covered with tall elms, opposite to — Lodge, and heard the autumnal winds whistle through the wood, whilst the beams of the setting sun, have given a golden appearance to the falling foliage! — And the pleasing melancholy, inspired by the sight of groves, half leafless, aided by a distant view of the village church; every object impressing an idea, of the passing glories of the world; which, a mind cheerful and innocent, contemplates with a sort of secret satisfaction, a sort of intellectual luxury:

„Sweet luxury! to vulgar minds unknown.“

The pleasures, which scenes like these have afforded me, made an early, and a lasting impression on my mind: and they often furnish me with melancholy musings, and „wrap me in a humorous sadness., — But you are near the spot, which has given rise to these reflections; and, if the business which called you so suddenly away, will permit you, perhaps you will indulge me with such thoughts, as occur, whilst you pass an hour in the summer-house, at the top of my favourite hill, where materials for writing are always kept in order, by the old gardener, who is the Methusalem of the neighbourhood, and has a kind of parental fondness, for every tree in the garden of ——— Lodge. He saw most of them planted; he watered, he protected, he pruned, to use a phrase of his own, he educated them. Tell him, that Felicia remembers all his little kindnesses, shewn
to

to her when she was a child, and a troublesome guest among the gooseberry bushes. —

But, pardon me, Frederick, perhaps, „I prattle out of tune, „ and am trifling, when your mind may be more seriously engaged.

Adieu!

Your

FELICIA,

LETTER VI.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

Apologies are due to my dear Felicia, for an apparent inattention in her Frederick, which, some less amiable women, would have construed into a want of confidence. —

I was agreeably surprized by the receipt of your letter, which has followed me from Northampton, for, that was not the ter-

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mination of my journey. I am now at a village, called Ockbrooke, in Derbyshire, from whence I intended informing you of the occasion of my journey, and soliciting your pardon, for leaving town without seeing you, and writing so shortly to you on the road. — I am charmed with your delicacy: you do not intimate the least desire, to know the nature of the business which brought me hither; but, as if it were possible for any letter of your's, to need an apology, you abruptly quit a subject that delights me, by supposing, „my mind to be more seriously engaged.,” — The appeal is as forcible as it is delicate: and you *shall* know, how my mind is engaged.

You are not unacquainted with the character of Captain B — whose amour with Lady — made a noise, some time ago.

ago. Would to heaven! he had confined his gallantries to the circle of those, who, like her Ladyship, disregard reputation, and, rather than not to be talked of, plunge into vice, to become *popular characters*! — Among those, who frequently attended on her Ladyship, was Anna D — an assistant to Mrs — a milliner in Bond - Street. Anna is seventeen, tall and beautiful: the Captain marked her as an object of prey, and took repeated opportunities of watching and following her, when her business was calling her from home. Anna is one of those, who, conscious of their own innocence, and the rectitude of their own minds, do not behave silly on such occasions. She did not assume the character of a prude, and repel his addresses with a forbidding, or rather a menacing language and countenance, which some mistake for an expression of virtue; but which

which is, in fact, mere vulgarity; nor did she appear, totally easy and careless of what he said, but was evidently distressed when he met her. She, however, treated him with the politeness due to him, and in some measure awed him, by the propriety of her behaviour; for, there is not a greater friend to true virtue than true politeness. The Captain found himself mistaken in her character. It is the misfortune of most girls, in that rank of society, to have received just as much education, as is sufficient to ruin them; to give them ridiculous ideas of life, and to make them, „sentimentally mad.,” Hence, men of gallantry, generally know, in what manner to win their affections; and hence it is, that they so frequently, become the objects of seduction. The education of Anna D ——— however, was of a different kind. Anna received a village education: that is to say, she went to school with

with many others, to the clerk of the parish; and, instead of modern books and amusement, was taught to read in the bible; her copies, were maxims of morality; and pious mottos, formed the subjects of her samplers; for, Goody Jones, the Clerk's wife, taught her needlework, in which she excelled so much, that the Vicar's sister, a maiden lady, took her under her immediate protection: for, Anna D — is the daughter of a labourer, who rents a cottage of my father's.

You will readily perceive, that I mention this, what will be called, plebejan mode of education, with some degree of approbation, though, it is now pretty generally exploded, even in villages. I must confess, that in my opinion, it has an advantage, for which I find no substitute, in the mode of education now adopted. The

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earliest impressions, it is well known, are the most lasting; and that mind, however otherwise cultivated, I cannot but regard as nearly barren, which has not acquired in youth, a certain veneration and love for the Deity, and a consequent dread, not only of vice, but even the appearance of it; this is more especially requisite for the female mind; and, in the middle and lower classes of life, I am at a loss to conceive, how these early impressions are to be made, and their correspondent opinions imbibed, if not by that devotional kind of instruction, which, late refinement has laughed into contempt; for, it must be remembered, that if these ideas, are not acquired in the juvenile school, they have little chance of being met with in the bustle of the world. —

But, in speaking of the simple education of Anna, I am led from her story; and my paper being full, and my time expired, my
 dear

dear Felicia must wait till the next post, to know the remainder of this story, and the business of her affectionate.

FREDERICK.

LETTER VII.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

I proceed, my Felicia, with the story of Anna D ——— Finding all his efforts vain; his offered presents refused; and, that Anna was not to be seduced, by the promise of indescribable pleasures and fashionable splendour, Captain B ——— knew but of one step to be taken, which could lead to the accomplishment of his wishes: — a promise of marriage. With this he thought, to quiet every fear, and silence every objection.

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The virtues of Anna, had however made such an impression on his mind, that it was not without extreme reluctance, that he had recourse to this last expedient; and he, for once, shuddered at the idea of the ruin of female innocence; for, though he was notorious for seduction, yet, his conscience did not experience many checks, as the elegance of his person, and his liberality in those tinsel presents, which fascinate the female mind, generally proved irresistible with the objects of his attachment.

Therefore, adopting this new scheme, he frankly told Anna, that her accomplishments had rendered her so amiable in his estimation, that the future happiness of his life, depended upon her compliance, with the request he was going to make her. It was true, he said, that he might find among higher ranks, a person better suited to his station;

station; but none who could so effectually contribute to his felicity. That he was weary of soliciting her attention; and that she had certainly mistaken his intentions, which were, „honourable.” — „Sir,” replied Anna, „it was impossible for me to know, what were your intentions. There was always an ambiguity in your language, which, however flattering to my vanity, could make no impression on my mind. The politeness, due to a stranger, prompts me to give attention to those, who honour me with their notice; but the duty, due to myself, forbids me construing the Language of apparent impartiality, into the dictates of sincerity, till I am convinced, there can be no sinister view intended, by that conduct, which has led so many of our sex into the paths of ruin. I am sorry, „Sir,” continued she, that I was not sooner acquainted with the extent of your esteem;

„because, regarding your attention to me,
 „only as a matter of amusement to yourself,
 „I may have erred in my conduct, and have
 „treated you with less respect than you
 „merited. That your intentions are hon-
 „ourable, gives me pleasure, not because
 „they flatter me with the attachment of so
 „fine a gentleman, but because, your own
 „heart cannot reproach you with intentions,
 „which, from your rank and circumstances
 „in life, I had too much reason to suppose,
 „gave rise to the acquaintance, with which
 „you have honoured me. And you will
 „confess, Sir, that it was impossible for
 „me, to suppose any thing in favour of your
 „designs, from the tenor of your language,
 „which was calculated to please my vanity,
 „but not to satisfy my heart. I have been
 „told, and I believe it is too true, that
 „many gentlemen, pay every attention to a
 „favourite object, till they are assured of a
 „return

„return of affection, and then take a cruel
 „and unmanly advantage of a prepossession,
 „which has been formed, without any ex-
 „press declaration on the part of the gen-
 „tlemen. I had therefore determined, never
 „to listen to any suggestions but those,
 „which came recommended by better mo-
 „tives, than an appeal to my own vanity,
 „Compliment, is usually the language of
 „deception, and ought always to excite
 „suspicion in a female mind. You will par-
 „don me then, Sir, if I have hitherto re-
 „garded all you have said, as a mere com-
 „pliment, and that I have, I hope without
 „impropriety, conducted myself accordingly,
 „You now tell me, that your intentions
 „are honourable; a declaration, which cer-
 „tainly demands my acknowledgments. But,
 „Sir, in a matter, which so nearly concerns
 „my happiness, you will permit me to con-
 „sult my friends, to none of whom, have

„I ever mentioned your name : „ — „You
 „will pardon me, my dear,„ replied Captain
 „B ——— if I request, that my attachment to
 „you, may remain a profound secret. To
 „reveal it, would at this time, very much
 „prejudice my interest, which I would wil-
 „lingly sacrifice to my Anna, but that our
 „future welfare may, in some measure,
 „depend upon this circumstance remaining
 „at present unknown. Propose any other
 „test of my affection, and I will gladly ac-
 „quiesce.” — „Sir,„ said Anna, I have no
 „other test to propose, nor am I desirous of
 „any: it is an easy matter to wait, till
 „every impediment is removed.” — To
 this, however, Captain B ——— would not
 attend: he spoke much of the ardor of his
 passion, and a private marriage; and left her
 for the express purpose, of procuring a spe-
 cial licence.

And

And now, my Felicia, wit is ith sorrow
 I reflect, that I am not writing a romance;
 and that the story of Anna D ——— has noth-
 ing uncommon in it. — A pretended mar-
 riage took place, with all the solemnities of
 a real one. This is the supreme villany of
 seduction; the ultimatum of human bar-
 barity. And surely, there is a deficiency
 in our laws, which inflict no punishment
 on a crime of this magnitude. „If,“ says
 a late writer, „a man steals my horse, I
 „can hang him; but, if he breaks my heart,
 „there is no recompense to be had; he tri-
 „umphs in his villany, and laughs to see
 „me bleed.“

Captain B ——— contrived it so, that
 Anna D ——— should remain with Mrs ———
 in Bond-Street, under pretence, that his
 fortunes would be ruined, were the mar-
 riage made public. It may naturally be

concluded, that the paroxism of passion being subsided, he began to treat Anna with inattention. This, she soon experienced, and suffered many unhappy hours. To reveal our griefs, has always been found a means of assuaging them. After some behaviour on the part of Captain B — which Anna considered as the effusion of estranged affection, she revealed the whole transaction to her mistress, to whom the character of Captain B — was too well known, not to suspect some unfair advantage had been taken. Advising Anna to meet him as usual, and to take no notice of the alteration of his conduct, Mrs — inserted in the news-papers, the following article: „Some time ago, was married by „special licence, Captain B — to Anna „D —, which was contradicted the following day, when Anna received a letter, (inclosing a bank-note of small value) reproach-

proaching her with a breach of confidence, in revealing the marriage, which Captain B ——— declared, he meant to have solemnized in a different manner, at a future period; but that, as she had proved herself unworthy, by revealing the secret of their connexion, it was with some degree of pleasure that he told her, the former marriage was void, the ceremony being performed by persons without authority. It is not for me to express the effects this letter produced. That sensibility, for which I so much love my Felicia, will need no language to excite her sympathy. — Such, however, was the effect, that Anna had nearly lost her life: she remained insensible and delirious a considerable time; and, her recovery was rather to be wished, than expected.

In the mean time, Mrs — wrote to Captain B — 's father, a country gentleman, and a man of probity, and informed him of the particulars of his son's conduct. Captain B — was at that time on a visit to his father, and, at his request, was forming a serious connexion with a lady in the neighbourhood. On the receipt of Mrs — 's letter, Mr B — did not communicate its contents to his son; but answering it, by acquainting Mrs — that he could not but regard Miss D — as his daughter-in-law, and would insist on Captain B — 's taking her home as his wife; but that he wished this to be postponed some time, for reasons, which he would communicate in a subsequent letter. This letter was greatly satisfactory to Mrs — and contributed much to the restoration of Anna's health.

Mr B ——— having written to a confidential friend, to make enquiries respecting Mrs ——— and Anna D ——— and finding their characters irreproachable, and that Mrs ———'s representations were founded on fact, thought it expedient, to prevent any further intercourse between his son and his neighbour's daughter, and for this purpose invited the lady, her father, and several friends of both parties, to partake of a haunch of venison. The dinner was well served, the claret good, and the company cheerful. The cloth being removed, Mr B ——— addressed them thus: — „I cannot „but thank you heartily for the favour of „this visit, which I hope, will be followed „by many others, equally friendly, but much „more to your satisfaction, as I trust, we „shall have a lady to do the honours of the „table, for, I am a widower, and my son a „bachelor; therefore you can expect little „more

„more than bachelor's fare; Jack, however,
 „is going to be contracted to this young
 „lady, and I am proud of his choice. But
 „Miss Mary has many admirers: it is possible
 „she may have a predilection in favour of
 „an other, and may assent to our proposals,
 „as tending to the happiness of parents,
 „though secretly undermining her own. I
 „would not, for any advantage, encourage
 „a connexion, which is not founded on mu-
 „tual esteem; and I hope, Miss Mary will
 „not omit the opportunity, now afforded
 „her, to declare her sentiments.” — The
 „young lady looked at the Captain, and
 „blushed. I see, „resumed Mr B —
 „the situation of your heart, and I am
 „ashamed of distressing you; and, I now
 „call upon Jack, to say, that he has no pre-
 „engagement; objections he can not have;
 „but I would have him act as a man of
 „honour, and not sacrifice by this connexion,
 „the

„the peace of any individual, breathing.”
 The Captain rising, and kissing the hand of Miss Mary, protested, that his vows were due to her alone; at the same time, he ventured to expostulate with his father, on his *outré* conduct. „Miss Mary,” said the old gentleman, „I am sure you will pardon that „rudeness, which my son corrects, when „you know, that it is exerted, to save you „from the arms of a man, who does not deserve you.” — At that moment, whilst the company was looking at each other with amazement, he rung the bell twice, which was the signal for me, my dear Felicia, and I suddenly entered, conducting the beautiful Anna, who had been arrayed as a bride, for that purpose. The company arose, the Captain was confounded, and Mr B — taking Anna in his arms, and saluting her, „This, Ladies and Gentlemen,” said he, „this is the wife of Captain B —

„to

„to this amiable girl, the roses of whose
 „cheeks are half faded, with unkindness and
 „neglect, to *her* he is married, and she is my
 „daughter!„

You now know the business that
 brought me into this neighbourhood. Adieu,
 for the present.

FREDERICK.

LETTER VIII.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

You have well accounted for your absence
 from town, and you have been employed
 in a business worthy of yourself. I tremble
 for the future felicity of Anna D ——— who,
 by this time, I suppose, and hope, has
 af-

assumed the name of B ——. In relating
 these circumstances, my dear Frederick, you
 have raised yourself a rival in my affection,
 and I expect to find you wonderfully jeal-
 ous. You need not be afraid of any pre-
 possession of mine, in favour of Captain
 B —— but I am actually in love with his
 father. Worthy, good old gentleman! —
 how few parents, in his situation, would
 have received Anna as a daughter! — how
 few, whom interest would not have render-
 ed callous to the feelings of humanity; and,
 how few, would not have left the deluded
 Anna, a prey to the most poignant of all
 human calamities! — Frederick! I am
 charmed with this good old man, — but,
 tell me, is he old? — If he is *not* — may
 he live, to feel all the serene pleasures,
 without the corroding cares of age! — If
 he is old — may all his future hours,
 partake of that luxuriant felicity, which he
 felt,

felt, when, folding Anna in his arms, he exclaimed, „this is my daughter!

Whilst I was writing the above, I received your letter, informing me of the *legal* marriage of Captain B ——— to Anna D ———. I am happy to hear it; but I again repeat, that I tremble for her future felicity, having no faith in the doctrine, that, „Reformed rakes, make the best husbands.” Besides, it does, not appear that Captain B ——— is a reformed rake. Who was it, Frederick, that broached a tenet so full of ignorant absurdity? — Alas! what happiness is to be expected in the society of those, who, by vicious intercourse, and habits of dissipation, have lost every delicate sensation, and are dead, to all the finer feelings of the soul? — But, I persuade myself, that my sentiments on this subject, correspond so exactly with yours, that I ought to apologize, for engaging

gaging your attention to common-place declamation.

By an unexpected revolution in our family politics, I shall have the pleasure of being in the country, before you leave it, when I shall insist on your introducing me, to the heroine of your tale, and to your rival, the senior Mr B ——. I am impatient to be at the Lodge, which to some of our company, will prove, „A dreary pile,„ but to me — the mansion of delight. — How is it, Frederick, that the country does not fill the breast of every one, with those rapturous sensations, which I feel on the sight of waving forests, and green fields? — Answer me this enigma, my guide, philosopher, and friend! — Adieu!

FELICIA.

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LETTER IX.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

The pleasure I shall experience, on seeing you in the country, will be greatly heightened, by the knowledge I have of your taste for rural scenery; and without that taste, how dull and dreary must be a situation, which is destitute of fashionable amusement! In saying this, however, I do not mean to depreciate such of those amusements, as have rational objects in view, or tend to excite sensations, by which the heart is meliorated, or the mind enlarged. — You express some degree of astonishment, that the scenes, which excite in your bosom rapturous ideas, are regarded by others with frigid indifference. This indifference, my dear Felicia, sometimes originates, in insensibility, but more commonly in a vitiated taste. There are some minds so constituted,

as

as to have no perceptions of the beauties of nature. — But why do I seriously attempt, to explain to you, what you understand so much better yourself? — I know, you are able to solve your own enigma; but, I fancy, you wish to employ my attention on the objects which surround me. — I shall be happier, to give you my sentiment, *verbally*, and your coming here, will afford me a favourable opportunity. Till then — adieu.

FREDERICK,

LETTER X.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

Your „domestic politics,, like the national politics, are subject to the vicissitudes of time and chance: and, by your brother, I

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learn,

learn, that you cannot accomplish, your intended visit to the country. Your verbal message, requesting, that I would continue the subject of my last, shall be complied with, though, I do it more, in obedience to your commands, than from any conviction in my own mind, of understanding the subject better than yourself.

Though, there are, as I observed, some minds so constituted, as to have no perception of the beauties of nature, yet, a taste for these, is to be acquired: and the most cultivated minds, possess that taste in the highest degree. To relish and enjoy rural scenery, to the *utmost extent*, it is absolutely necessary, that the mind should be free from every tincture of vice: it should not even be warped, by being accustomed to behold dissipation. Those, who delight in artificial life — and I need not tell

tell my dear Felicia, that there is a great difference, between *artificial* and *social* life, — will gaze on that magnificence which charmed a Thomson, but they will gaze without rapture, and willingly turn aside to the first object of factitious elegance. Hence I am led to admire the justice of that sentiment of divines, which teaches us, that unhallowed souls, would find no happiness in the regions of the blessed; that they would behold with indifference, the smile of felicity; and hear, without pleasure, the harmony of heaven.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged, that we are so much the creatures of example and habit, that some, who fancy themselves admirers of nature, are actuated by no other motive, than the vanity of imitation, or the recollection of infantine pleasures. Thus, the citizen, who

once a week, retires to his country-box, plants potatoes, and gathers gooseberries with his own hand, fancies that he has a taste for the country. He is first influenced by novelty, or more probably, by vanity; and then, habit renders that pleasant, to which he is, in fact, attached only by habit. Taste has nothing to do with it. No! it requires an expanded mind, to enjoy the pleasures of simplicity; and, it also requires a benevolent heart, a sort of universal philanthropy. You will conceive my idea, from the following passage: The feelings I most delight in, are those I experience, when, in a fine morning, I ascend a mountain, that commands an extensive prospect of woods and waters. I look around me, and my heart glows with universal benevolence. My mind expands with the prospect before me, and I forget all the petty distinctions of morality, by contemplating

plating the whole globe as one spot — as a little paradise, diversified with innumerable beautiful objects, which receive additional splendor and cheerfulness, from the rays of a refulgent sun. „*) But what, my dear Felicia, what is the sight of flowing rivers, of waving woods, of clouds sailing under the canopy of heaven, to the miserable wretch, whose mind is for ever intent on the commerce of the world, and, estimating his pleasures, by the extent of his interest?

It is very easy to perceive, that pleasures, which partake so much of the intellectual, and depend so much on purity of conduct, can not be so generally enjoyed as one could wish. Happy are you, my Felicia, that, untainted by the breath of fashion, you seek, and you find in your

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*) Letter XLIII. of Charlotte, during her connexions with Werter.

own bosom, the purest fountain of delight. Wretched are they, who depend on others for felicity! — And such is the miserable state of all, who cannot hold, „communion sweet,, with their own hearts, and who feel not the kind attractions, the delicious sympathies of humanity!

In answer to your question, then, I pronounce, that the enjoyment of rural scenery, is not precluded the generality of people, so much from a want of taste, as from a want of innocence. For, it may be remarked, that in our early years, we all delight in rural recreations: it is only, when we become accustomed to, and mix in, artificial life, that we lose our primitive relish, for these innocent enjoyments.

So long, therefore, as you find in your heart, a strong propensity to rural pleasures; so

so long as simple and unadorned nature, excites in your mind, magnificent ideas; so long, my Felicia, will you rejoice in your existence, and by being happy in yourself, render all about you happy; — and, whenever you find, that you are indifferent to such scenes, and behold them without pleasing emotions, do not attribute the change in your sentiments, to a change of taste, but carefully examine your heart, and you will find, that the change originates, either in guilt or folly. But as I know, your mind is destitute of the latter, so I trust, you will never feel the things of the former. — Adieu, my Felicia! — may the rural deities ever hover round you!

FREDERICK,

LETTER XI.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

I thank you again and again, for the poems you sent me. I will, hereafter, give you my opinion of them ingenuously. But of the novel which accompanied them, what shall I say? — Nothing but your desire could have tempted me to the perusal of it. And, surely, you made the request, that I might be induced, to entertain a still more contemptible opinion of modern novel, than I had. — I am wearied and disgusted with that affectation of sensibility, which pervades all these effusions of insipidity. True tenderness or compassion, is one of the most amiable distinctions of our nature. But a very small degree of it, goes a great way, towards forming a character of fashionable sensibility; for, of what does it consist? — an ostentatious display of pretended feeling.

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One would imagine, from the number of charitable subscriptions at the watering places, that our *noblesse*, were the most humane, and compassionate people in the world. But, alas! while they are inserting their names, — not forgetting their titles — in the lists of the charitable, their own neighbourhood in the country, exhibits instances of extreme poverty and distress, or perhaps, some poor relation is pining in anguish, for the conveniencies of life. True tendernefs, would relieve these — and it was once the fashion, to relieve such — but, modern sensibility has wisely discovered, that such contributions might prove expensive, without acquiring that reputation for humanity, which is to be derived from public subscriptions.

Ah! my dear Frederick, how little allied, is this false form of virtue to the
true!

true! — A heart susceptible of real sensibility, will not be less alive to the impressions of devotions, than those of love. But, what would be thought of a fine lady, whose sensibility should be *contaminated* by *true* religion? — Thus, what heaven created as perpetual concomitants, fashion and folly have separated; and it seems to be the object of all modern romance, to represent sensibility, as a fit substitute for religion, when, in truth, it is only one of its more amiable effects.

Send me no more novels, till the fashion has subsided, of recommending this affectation of the virtue of humanity. I perceive, that, when one novel is read — all are read! and, it would hardly be proved a falsehood to say, that in reading two volumes, you have read two thousand. Adieu!

FELICIA.

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LETTER XII.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

*W*hat you tell me of your sister, gives me great concern. A dissipated life, even if it is not extravagant, leads to certain and innumerable evils. The attempts of Mr. B — her husband, to change her conduct, you say, have proved unsuccessful. I do not wonder at it, as, from the little I have observed, he seems to have mistaken her temper. The utmost mildness, and nothing but the utmost mildness, can affect. It is in vain to reprehend. His earnest endeavours should not shew themselves, in the language of disapprobation. Whatever faults she may have committed, should be noted in their consequences, — point out those, and it will have more effect, than the best rhetoric of the best speaker. To expatiate, and to moralize, will do no good:

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it is generally offensive, as it implies some degree of superiority: you may readily convince people of their errors; but the mode usually taken to do that, prevents their adopting the maxims you mean to recommend. There are few people so destitute of pride, as to submit to a dictator, for the regulation of their private conduct.

I remember, the last time we dined with Mr and Mrs B ——— he censured her, not in the gentlest manner, before his children, and at the same time before her servants. This was very wrong: it was depriving her of that respect, to which she is entitled, both as a mother of children, and the Mistress of a family. And nothing can be more distressing to her guests.

Great allowances are to be made in favour of all women, but especially of

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Married women, whose peevishness, is generally owing to the temper of their husbands, or to domestic evils. To be Mistress of a family, is to be in a situation, of all others, the most abounding in cares and duties; and a woman should be treated with the utmost tenderness, even if she is sometimes guilty of follies, provided, that those follies do not, in their consequences, tend to the destruction of the welfare or felicity of her family. In this respect, however, I must confess, that husbands are too frequently blameable. Their attention is divided between business and pleasure: business, in which the wife can have no concern; and, too often in pleasure, in which she has no share. A thousand minute attentions and anxieties, daily attend a mother, of which a father can have but a faint conception. She naturally expects to be rewarded for these; and to have

have her cares softened, by a tender solicitude, on the part of her husband. But, alas! how frequently does it happen, that, in returning from business which has, perhaps, proved unsuccessful, or from pleasure, in which he has drowned the thought, of all tender and domestic concerns, the husband meets his wife with a temper and language, little calculated to soothe her cares, to recompense her toils, and to alluage her anxieties!

And this may be, and daily is done, without any malevolent intention in the husband: it generally originates, either in ignorance of the nature of the female sex, and of their cares and duties; or, in a want of that delicacy, with which they ought always to be treated. Is it any wonder, then, that, after repeated courses of such behaviour, the wife, finding the whole weight

weight of domestic duty resting on herself, should sink under it; or, should determine, to have her share of pleasure too, and abandon her husband and her cares for those enjoyments, which temptation has perhaps been long impressing on her mind?

The heart of Mrs — I am sure, is not bad. Her chief fault is, that she is passionate. Unfortunately Mr B — too, is somewhat warm in his temper. One of them should give way, and I think, for the honour of our sex, that, in these cases, it should be the husband: it requires a small exertion of philosophy, and it does not become a man, to have less command of himself than a woman. A favourite writer of yours says, that, „a soft answer turneth away wrath:„ passion is to be conquered only by mildness. Could any

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thing

thing be more beautiful, than to see Hector disarmed by Andromache?

I know, you are much affected at the discontent, which sometimes pervades your sister's house, and that you could give her admirable instruction — but she is your *elder* sister, and you justly think, she would deem your interference, rather as an act of impertinence than of sisterly affection. You cannot, I think, do better than speak to Mr B — I am sure, he would attend to you with pleasure; and, I am confident, you would convince his reason — for, when do you speak in vain? I cannot comply with your request: I dread nothing so much as giving advice to any but those, nearest my heart; from you it will come with so much gentleness, so much amiableness, that your manner, as well as your words, will be

re-

recollected in every moment, when your maxims ought to be adopted.

I am sorry, I could not meet you at the theatre last night. „How did you like the „play?“ Did you ever know Thalia more polished in her diction? or uttering so much good sense, by so many different agents? Adieu! — Tell me, my fair Critic, and I will abide by your decision: — always remembering, that your decision is, one day, to decide the fate of

Your affectionate

FREDERICK.

LETTER XIII.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

Indeed, Frederick, you are vastly gallant in your last letter. *Bachelor's wives*, they say, — but I did not expect to find such sentiments from you, respecting *husbands*. To be serious: I thank you for your strictures: and, I heartily wish for my sister's happiness. Mr B ——— thought as you do. But, great allowances are to be made for him too. You know, he is engaged in a business, rapidly encreasing, which requires much personal attention, and is not free from those vexations, to which all are liable, who have to deal with the mercantile part of the world. My sister should certainly sacrifice some of that pettishness, which ought never to be indulged, but which, to a man of his temper, and under certain circumstances, must be intolerable,

I tell her this: and, all the reply I can get, is, that when I am married, she will talk to me. A pretty insinuation in your favour, Master Frederick!

So, you want me, to give you a critic on the new play. I will tell you my sentiments; but as to criticism, that is out of the question. I judge of performances as they affect me, and not systematically. You are right: the comic muse never was more polished, and that is the chief fault I have to find with the play. Our beaux and belles, must be wonderfully improved in knowledge and sentiment, and particularly in their language, before this comedy can be said to be a representation of nature, or even, of what you very justly call, *artificial life*.

These sentimental plays, which are now so much in vogue, are sermons in dialogue: where do you find the ladies and gentlemen that talk so elegantly, or rather so *precisely*? — Their language, seems to me, to be the language of epistolary, rather than of verbal communication. Yet, I am pleased to see plays of this kind: if they are not true pictures of life, they shew, at least, what life itself ought to be. — I wish, they may have their intended effect; but I am afraid they will only fill the head, when they should influence the heart; in a word, I am afraid they will teach us, „to assume „a virtue, though we have it not, — and that is a mode of conduct, too nearly allied to hypocrisy, to meet my concurrence.

The sentimental comedy, as it is no true picture of nature, can not long retain its pre-eminence on the British stage. I am
happy

happy in the reflection, that the general taste of this country, which has so justly rejected, the intolerable bombast of modern tragedy, will not long encourage any species of entertainment, which does not come strongly recommended by nature and probability.

You will ask me then, why I am so great an admirer of the Italian opera? — — —
 Let me see you in Miss G ——'s box, to-morrow evening, and I will tell you. — — —
 Till then, adieu!

FELICIA,

LETTER XIV.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

After the most pointed part of last night's conversation, and as I see your sister Mary

is greatly attached to Frank S—— which indeed you had before intimated to me, I can not refuse your request, in giving you the best information I am able, respecting those traits in his character, which excite your curiosity, and which appear not a little inexplicable.

Frank, has received an education, which has left his mind in an awkward predicament: he has learning sufficient, to know the advantages of learning, but not to enjoy them; and, he is impatient for literary honours, without resolution to undergo the fatigues of literary acquisitions. I particularly mention the extent of his education, because, it has no small influence in the formation of his character. Had he not applied to letters, it is probable, there would not have been any of those traits, which require investigation; or, had he applied
more

more fully, he would have discovered the beauties of that simplicity, to which he is, apparently at least, a stranger. There is a wonderful coincidence, between Frank's disposition and his style of writing: they both partake of the mysterious; and, this arises from a mistaken idea, that abilities are best shewn, through an artificial medium. It is but too much the fashion of the world, to sacrifice nature to art; and, mankind are prompted to act thus, from the suggestion of that vanity, which so much delights in its own works.

In characters, such as Frank's, it is difficult to discover the real temper and disposition; because, the heart is covered with the trappings of affectation. A lady of our acquaintance, frequently contends with me, that Frank has no heart at all. It is true, that he has a certain coldness

about that quarter, which does not result from a philosophic misanthropy, or from the evils of life, and may therefore, be supposed to be natural. He has no enthusiasm, and yet, he is a poet; but when he writes, he never writes from or to the heart. The most elegant and the most captivating correspondence, never pierces through the shield of insensibility, which defends his bosom from those arrows of delicacy, that so deeply wound a heart of feeling: and yet, the greatest part of Frank's letters and conversation, turn on sensibility and the sympathy of souls. — — — Can you conceive any thing more strange, or contradictory? — — — And yet, this is in nature: *Ecce homo!* — — — What shall I say? — You ask me, whether Frank is a *worthy* character; whether he merits the hand of your sister Mary? — — — I think he does; for, though his heart is concealed as much

as possible, from the prying curiosity of your *heart-decypherers*, yet, it is evidently, *at bottom*, a good heart: I grant you, that it is difficult to come at the bottom; and that, like futurity, Frank's heart is hid in clouds and darkness: but, my dear Felicia, this mystery, this concealment, with the oblique conduct it superinduces, does not originate in any pernicious principle; it is purely the result of vanity: and, it is that kind of vanity, which means no harm to any one. Now, if we consider the youth of Frank, the education he has received, the erroneous notions he has formed, we must not attribute his indiscretions so much to his heart, as to his head: and, you may rest assured, that, experience will soon teach him, the infinite superiority of simplicity over artifice. I have studied Frank, with some attention; and, as most men have, what is vulgarly called, „*a blind side*,“ a
rul-

ruling passion, so I discover his to be vanity; and, I do not recollect, any one instance of his conduct, which had the appearance of mystery, that was not by him intended as a means, either directly or indirectly, to the gratifying his vanity. This passion, we all know, is the mother of self-love, and prompts us to do many things, which can not but appear extremely ridiculous, in the eyes of other people. Such are the *outlines* of my sentiments, respecting Frank. If you know any part of his conduct, which is, at once, mysterious and exceptionable, and you cannot justly attribute it to the influence of vanity, inform me of it, and I will further develope, this strange compound of *insensible sensibility*, and exhibit him, in still more forcible colours. Adieu!

FREDERICK.

LET

LETTER XV.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

*P*ardon me, Frederick, I shewed your letter to my sister Mary. She is happy, that you entertain so favourable an opinion of her lover; but she, like all other lovers, has a number of questions to ask. I have prevailed on her, to write to you. However, I will *favour* you with a postscript. — — —
Be candid!

FELICIA,

LETTER XVI.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

*H*ow, could you, my dear girl, so far forget your own dignity, and disregard my peace, as to pay the least attention to one, for whom, you know, I entertain an unfavour-

favourable opinion: nay, for whom you ever express yourself, with a certain degree of abhorrence? — Do we not know, that man's views? — Do we not know his character? — Do we not know, that he would sacrifice every thing, to a passion destitute of affection or sentiment, destructive to every idea of tenderness and delicacy? — And yet, you, this very night, within these two hours, could give him an approving smile, for some miserable attempts at miserable wit, and encourage the wretch to stay in your company, even after he proposed his departure, by asking him some trivial question; and when you saw, that his presence chagrined and distressed me beyond measure! — It is not often Felicia, that we can be alone; but to be thus interrupted, and the interruption thus *encouraged*, when it might have been — Heavens! I have no patience to think of it!

Ex.

Excuse me, my Felicia, for quitting you so abruptly: it was impossible for *me*, to wait till that coxcomb, who seemed to exult in your apparent desire to detain him, should answer the question you asked him, which, though trivial as it was, involved the discussion of extraneous matter, and may not, even yet, be decided. There are some people, who, being once asked a question, take the liberty afterwards of supposing themselves, or of endeavouring to induce others to believe, that they are in great confidence with you; and, whose subsequent impertinences, it is impossible to bear. This consideration will, I trust, justify me in any apparent neglect or want of attention, either to yourself or Mr M ——. Adieu!

FREDERICK,

LET

LETTER XVII.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

*I*s then common civility a crime? — and am I always to exhibit a conduct, so decidedly in favour of Frederick, as to render me ridiculous in the eyes of those, who cannot judge? — Would it not have been wrong in me, so to have conducted myself, that M ——— might have said: I expressed a degree of impatience to be left alone with you? — Your prepossession in my favour, is well known; but is it necessary, that mine, in favour of you, should be equally exposed? O Frederick! I thought I was acting consistently, with that delicacy you so much respect. I am sure, my conduct was dictated by a spirit, very different from that, to which it is attributed, by the too impatient Frederick.

FELICIA.

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

FREDERICK to FELICIA:

*P*ardon me, my Felicia, if I expressed myself too hastily, respecting Mr —— But you will recollect the sentiments I always entertained, of that man's character; and, that he should be the instrument, of any unkindness on my part towards thee, is sufficiently vexatious, not to say distressing, to merit pardon for what may, perhaps properly enough, be deemed irregular, or singular behaviour.

When, however, I speak of singularity of behaviour, I do not mean altogether to reproach myself; what in others might appear singular, perhaps should not seem so in me; for, I do not, especially in matters which deeply concern my happiness, hold myself bound, to observe the mechanical

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rules,

rules, of what is called, good breeding. Propriety, in these cases, is only to be *felt*: it sets all rule at a distance, and, sometimes, all description; and, is it necessary then, to apeal to the *heart*? which, when it is as it ought to be, will ascribe to every action, its proper motive.

Fully satisfied of the propriety of my felicia's conduct, inform me, my dear girl, that you forgive me. Ah, my love! this is first, and I trust will be the last time, we shall misunderstand each other. I wait with impatience for thy commands, which I trust, will be for the immediate attendance of

Thy faithful

FREDERICK.

LET-

LETTER XIX.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

Your candour, Frederick, has procured you something more than your pardon: it has procured an acknowledgment from me, that my conduct, was not altogether so proper as it might have been. In my attention to the nonsense of Mr M ——— to give the gentlest term, I believe I might over-act my part. But, surely, my Frederick ought to have seen through, and made allowance for that. When we endeavour to hide our feelings, and would fain persuade the world that we have no attachment, where it is the strongest, how difficult it is, to avoid giving, by the most intelligible symptoms, a flat contradiction to our external actions, or general professions! Thus it is, to be under the influence of passion! — and, is not every passion a

species of intoxication? — and thus, we cry out with drunken Cassio, in the play, „Now mind, I am not drunk: this is my right hand, and this is my left,, — When it is pretty evident, that he does not know the one from the other.

You are right, in concluding my conduct, to be the effect of propriety, at least: I think, indeed, that the more I erred, the more was I in the right. There is a paradox for you: but the paradox will vanish, when you recollect my motive for my conduct — that I behaved thus lightly before you, to avoid the imputation of improper, not to say, indelicate constructions being put, on a different mode of behaviour, by one of Mr M —'s superficial cunning: for, this sort of beings are the most mischievous fools in nature, and, like some of the commentators on Homer, read in the
lang-

language, even of ordinary conversation, a vast deal more, than ever was intended to be conveyed. Believe me, Frederick, it is dangerous, to speak a serious word before such people; and, much more for me, to behave as Felicia to Frederick. With all thy knowledge of this man's character, recollect this; and, be thankful that I pardon you, for your misconception of *mine*. But remember, that I pardon it conditionally, that you will never censure my conduct, till you are more acquainted with my motives: that would be the height of injustice, nay, of cruelty: it is, however, injustice and cruelty, daily practised by thousands, upon tens of thousands, and productive of a full moiety, of the miseries of the miserable.

We are to have a private concert, this evening. — That will be no bad opportunity

tunity for you, to make your appearance: the music, doubtless, will soften me into a tolerable humour; and, I do not think, your presence will tend, to destroy a particle of that harmony, which, I trust, will always pervade the bosom of

FELICIA.

LETTER XX.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

*T*here is but one festival in the world, that could possibly add to the happiness I experienced last night, whilst you were playing that divine composition, furnished by thy own fancy, and giving new grace to Collins's Ode on the passions. Strange! that
no

no *great* master has thought proper to set in music, the only Ode in the English language, except Dryden's, capable of receiving, with peculiar felicity, every species of musical composition. However, it is not lost: my Felicia has appropriated to it, such music, as would have made Collins confess thy powers of expression, superior to his. — Is it not strange too, that in this ode on the passions, the principal passion should be omitted? — the passion which has given birth to more poetry, than all other passions and subjects united? — That Collins should omit *Love*. „The noblest passion and the best,, has always struck me as a *singularity*, singularly singular.

Appropos! — who was that *punning* puppy, who accompanied Miss B — I never saw so egregious a coxcomb; nor so

miserable a punster. How wonderful it is, that a man should take so much pains, to make himself disgusting and ridiculous? — You must procure his address, and send him, „God’s Revenge against Punning.,” — Were I a despotic monarch, I would lay pains and penalties on all those, who should presume to pun, without „Setting the Table in a „Roar.,” — I do not see, why a good pun may not be a good thing — but nothing can be more miserable than a miserable pun. I always took — or rather mistook — Miss B — for a rational young Lady; but, her association with that same punster, I confess, has strangely altered my opinion.

What, in fact, have I to do with these people? — They belong to a different world from mine: and, by what chance they came to glimmer — for they can never shine — in the same sphere with my Felicia,

cia, I know not: perhaps Felicia can tell me.

I remember the time, however, when I should have thought, characters of this kind very necessary in mixed companies, to contribute to the diversity of the general entertainment; but, my mind is too seriously attached to thee, to receive delight from the contemplation of perfection less than thine. Upon the whole, I think I behaved with wonderful civility, and great decorum, and, the few minutes conversation I had with my Felicia, amply made amends, for all the nonsensical impertinence, one was otherwise doomed to hear.

An other thing you certainly can inform me of: who was the old lady in the mulberry-coloured satin, in whose eye I saw the starting tear, whilst you were fingering,

„Auld Robin Gray?“ — When age exhibits such feelings, on *such* occasions, I am certain, the life has been a life of innocence: the heart has not been hardened, by the prosperities, or the follies of the world. — If thou livest — as, I trust thou wilt — to be an old woman — and I live too — thou shalt certainly wear a mulberry-coloured satin, and cry, to hear some pretty girl sing: „Auld Robin Gray. And that thou mayest never have a more mournful occasion for thy tears, is the heart-felt wish of

Thy affectionate

FREDERICK.

LET-

LETTER XXI.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

The almost sudden death of Mrs K ——— fills me with great concern, and must be highly alarming to her family. That she was so well prepared for so great a change, ought to abate the sorrow of her friends. There was always something of the heroine about her; and, the manner of her death, has fully confirmed me in that idea: she quitted life, merely as a departure from one country to an other, and a better. Her weeping over her children, and then smiling on them, with ineffable sweetness, and afterwards, taking them to her bosom in a fit of laughter, reminds me of the death of Anne Boleyn, who was, however, subject to great inequalities of the mind. During her imprisonment, she wept and sang alternately; and in an instant was observed to

to make a transition from joy to grief. When on the scaffold, she asked the executioner: if he was expert at his business, and presently burst into a fit of laughter.

There is nothing more important nor interesting, than contemplations on the dying moments of others; particularly of those learned men, who have entertained opinions, inimical to the great truths of christianity; or have spent their time, in those idle pursuits of learning, which have little effect else, than to fill the head with useless trifles, without at all affecting the heart. The life of the famous *Gassendi*, was of this kind. He piqued himself not at all, upon the superiority of his knowledge, not even upon his own discoveries in nature, which, you will recollect, were very considerable. And, in his last moment, he shewed too visibly, that he was of opinion, he had
spent

spent his time less usefully, than he might have done. Some few hours before Gassendi expired, he seemed uncommonly pensive, and being asked — what he thought on? replied: „I know not how I came into the „world; why I came into it; or, why „I am to leave it.” — From one who had the light of revelation, and who had studied arduously, forty years together, could one possibly have expected so ignorant a declaration?

You have read *Hobbes*, one of the first philosophers, and one of the brightest geniuses of England. He thought freely, and expressed himself boldly. His best works are particularly distinguishable, by a certain decisive manner of expression. An enemy to superstition, he abhorred all, who attempted to propagate popular credulity; and yet, this man dreaded being alone especially

cially in the night: such was his apprehension of spirits and witches! — At the approach of death, however, he altered his way of thinking; and, unconcerned, perused with seeming satisfaction, several epitaphs, his friends had composed for him, and, with great gaiety of spirit, fixed on the following: „This is the Philosopher's „Stone:„ — alluding, I suppose, to death. As his illness increased, and his end approached, he cried out: „I am going to take a „great leap in the dark.,„ — Such, with all his knowledge, was his idea of futurity! — Thus, nothing can equal the absurdity of men, „Wise in their own conceit,, — and who are unwilling to be taught, by a greater master than their own reason!

What different ideas and sensations does the death of *Addison* afford! — In the
calm

calm moment of a peaceful departure:
 „See, „said he, how a christian can die!„ —
 He had learned and maintained, the grand
 distinction, between a single passage in the
 sacred oracles, and all the volumes that
 mere philosophy ever produced.

My Felicia will excuse, my adducing
 these reflections; they are such, as the
 death of friends can not but excite; and,
 there is a melancholy pleasure, in meditat-
 ing on the latter end of those, who have,
 „fought the good fight.,„

I will, assuredly, take upon me an
 active department, as one of the executors
 of Mrs K ——. I am sorry she has nom-
 inated G —— as a coadjutor: the self-
 importance and obstinacy of that man, will
 probably occasion us much vexation. He
 is of the temper, ascribed to Cicero by
 Bru-

Brutus: „and never will pursue, what other
 „men begiu.” And, such is the wrong-
 headedness of his judgment, that, what *he*
 begins, is likely to terminate no way fav-
 ourable, either to himself, or any one else.

Adieu, my Felicia! — expect me on
 Sunday; provided, you have no musical
 party: for, I do not yet entirely coincide
 with the idea, that, attending concerts, is
 the *best* mode of passing the evening of the
 Sabbath.

Your

FREDERICK.

LET-

LETTER XXII.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

In the death of Mrs K — I have lost a sincere and valuable friend. She was one of those women, who, to the practice of all the domestic duties, joined an elegant taste, and refined manners; a character, I am sorry to say, extremely uncommon: as if there were something incompatible, between modern accomplishments and solid virtues.

That she was unhappy in her marriage, is greatly to be lamented, and many were illiberal enough, to attribute it to her as a fault, for forming an attachment for life, with one, so little capable of tasting her virtues, or enjoying her conversation. — But, alas! does not passion render us blind to imperfection? — And would it not have

G

been

been strange, for a mind like Mrs K——'s, not to have felt the influence of love, at a very early period? at a period when the judgment could not have been matured, and when almost every object is seen through a false medium? — And, let it be recollected, that Mr K —— was in his manner extremely specious, and had the appearance, at least, of possessing many valuable virtues; virtues, which youthful and ardent affection, would, easily magnify into absolute perfection. Had she met with a mind like her own, death would scarcely have effected any change in her felicity.

I kne wnot that Frederick had any material objection to the Sunday concert, or I certainly would not have engaged myself as a hearer, much less, as a performer. And, till I hear how your objections are grounded, you must pardon me if I think them fastidious.

dious; and yet, I am so accustomed, to regard your judgment as infallible, that I shall not be perfectly easy, till I am confirmed in my present mode of thinking, or, converted to yours. Satisfy the doubts you have raised in my bosom, and believe me

Truly yours,

FELICIA.

LETTER XXIII.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

To you, my Felicia, it can be of little consequence, how the Sunday, or any other evening, is passed; because, your mind, is stored with proper reflections, and regulated by devotional taste, can not suffer, from

what might operate prejudicially, on a mind less perfect.

When I observed, „That, attending concerts, is not the *best* mode of passing the „evening of the Sabbath,„ I did not mean to apply the observation to *you*. Your being a hearer, but especially a performer, which would give it, in my opinion, and must so in others, that kind of charm, which connects the most heavenly science, with the most heavenly contemplation. What good may not be expected from that beauty, which, while we admire it, makes us also in love with virtue; and that beauty too, in the act of the most elevated, the most divine part of devotion? —

„*Hymning angelic strains!*„

But the effect may be very different, upon minds less cultivated; and, most people

people are led by fashion, rather than sentiment. We all know the potent power of music; and, such is the strange turn of some minds, that any music; on any subject, makes them *merry*, and excites folly. Perhaps, this was the reason, why Plato banished music from his Republic. It certainly was the reason, why there was so much contention, among some of the Grecians, about an additional string to the lyre.

Do not think me fastidious, my Felicia; nor deprive yourself, of any mode of pursuit, which may contribute to your satisfaction; because, I may happen to disapprove of it in others, or in myself — I will, if possible, meet you at Lord A—'s, on Tuesday. Adieu!

FREDERICK.

LETTER XXIV.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

I must petition you, Frederick, on behalf of an amiable woman. I must enlist you as a knight, in defence of injured innocence: as a knight, to contend with superiour powers — superiour in the vulgar calendar, which gives the red letter to title and affluence.

The lady „in mulberry-coloured fatten,, of whom you made enquiry in a former letter, is my heroine. She, like Mrs K — was early married to Mr R — a son of elegance and dissipation. She was a beauty, a wit, a fortune: — a beauty without vanity, and a wit without ill-nature. Her fortune was such, as might have secured a proper portion of it, to her exclusive use. But, to a mind like hers, could such an idea occur?

occur? — And, however necessary it may be, I should hold in contempt the *female* mind, that, impressed by passion, or influenced by affectation, *could* attend to such affairs. It is the part of the lover, to do that, which may secure the present and future felicity of her, whom he means to shield from worldly vicissitudes. There is something indelicate, I had almost said, base and sordid, in a *woman*, discovering an extreme solicitude, about pecuniary matters. And yet, how many instances of misery are there, made so, by the want of such attention! — This, however, reflects disgrace on your sex only.

The dissipated life of Mr R — was not to be supported by a regular income. He mortgaged great part of his property, and from time to time, added new incumbrances to his estate. A life of dissipation,

does not affect property only: it demands a sacrifice of health; and, Mr. R —— died just soon enough, to save him from feeling all the ills that await adversity.

His death proved the signal for the cormorants of the law; his creditors were merciless: not satisfied with taking all he had possessed, they left his lady destitute. Fortunately, she, uninfluenced by fashion, though in the midst of its circle, and always pursuing a conduct, that had the strongest recommendation of all that is *right and beautiful*, gained the immediate support of some noble friends, to whom virtue always will remain virtue, array her how you will.

In the list of these friends, is not to be placed any of her own relatives. Though, allied to some of what are called, the first fami-

families, they left her to struggle with the waves of adversity; nor, offered the hand of assistance, in the hour of distress. It was doubtless incumbent on them, to have yielded her, at least, a decent support; but, they chose rather to excuse themselves, by reproaching *her* with her *husband's* follies: and, they trusted, that by withholding all aid, they should drive her to infamy, and thus, render any pretensions to their kindness, abortive.

Such was the design of a *great* family, towards the best and most worthy part of it. In this, however, they were mistaken; „Adversity may subdue the *Cheek*, but not „take in, the *Mind*.„ — And Mrs R—— remained just as much revered and beloved, in adversity, as in prosperity, by those, who know to appreciate, and who to discriminate.

The Duchess Dowager of — who had always loved and admired Mrs R ——— and had ever recommended her as a model to her daughters, settled an annuity, during the Duches's pleasure, on Mrs R ——— who having claims on property in the West-Indies, would not accept of a life estate, but meant, on the recovery of her property, to repay all, which the Duchess might advance.

This conduct of the Duchess, was a severe sarcasm on that of Mrs R ———'s family, who, however, patiently bore the stigma: for, what will not an earthly soul undergo, to accumulate dross? — They, however kept a strict eye upon Mrs R ——— and hoped to find some pretence in her conduct, to justify their own.

However, several years revolved, without any such event taking place: and, before Mrs. R ——'s claims were settled, the Duchess Dowager of — died, too suddenly to make any provision for Mrs. R —— . She, nevertheless, on her death-bed earnestly recommended her, to the care of her daughters.

One of the ladies, happened to frequent the same parties, as Lord and Lady —— the immediate relatives to Mrs. R —— and, who took the first opportunity of insinuating, that the goodness of the late Duchess had been abused, in its extension to one, so undeserving as Mrs. R —— for whom, they said, it was doubtless *their* duty, to have provided, had she been worthy of family support. They wisely forbore, however making any specific charge: nevertheless, their
after-

assertion could not but have great weight: and though, Mrs. R ——— continues to receive a benevolence, by order of the ladies, she is not favoured with their visits: and, doubtless the first opportunity will be taken, to withdraw all assistance, and to withhold all intercourse.

Now, Frederick, dare you — like a true and valiant knight — become the protector and defender of an injured woman: a woman, who is as great an ornament to our sex, as you are to yours — — — and, what can I say more in her favour? For my own part, I feel myself so much interested in her behalf, that I would exert every power to serve her: and, shall certainly take the liberty very soon, of asking Lady ——— what is the *rumour* respecting Mrs. R ——— and, I shall then be able to
guess,

guess, what they, in the folly and malice of their wisdom, mean to be *understood* of the conduct of one, to whom they are a disgrace.

Mrs. R ——— 's claims being yet unsettled, though, there is no doubt of their propriety; I therefore must entreat, you will advise with your friend, Mr Lee, on the subject, and, Mrs R ——— will furnish you with materials. She will take tea with me to morrow, and I shall expect you. I thought it necessary to premise thus much, that you might be able to enter on the subject, without giving Mrs R ——— the painful necessity, of relating her own misfortunes. —

I am just favoured with your valuable present of books; on several of which, I am happy to find animadversions, by so ingenious a commentator as yourself; and, I
plain-

plainly perceive, that the comments, on two in particular, will prove more acceptable to me, than the text.

Adieu!

FELICIA.

LETTER XXV.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

Nothing, my dear Felicia, puts me more out of conceit with the world. and all that is in it, than finding the most despicable ill-liberality and petty vices, among those, who ought to be: „Patterns in a degenerate „land.,” Your account of Mrs. R ——— and of her family, gives a stab to my peace, which is always wounded, when I hear of any thing disgraceful to human nature. I
feel

feel a kind of shame for my own species, which is heightened in proportion, to the elevation of the parties. You may depend on every exertion in my power to rescue Mrs. R — from the imputations thrown upon her conduct, and that I will not spare Lady — or any other part of Mrs. R — 's family, whose duty it is to defend her from the murderous aim of slander, and: „Not bear the knife themselves „ — I hope, and think, that I shall bring them to make proper acknowledgments.

My wishes are equally fervent, but my hopes are not so strong, in favour of young K — whose accomplishments are not of the right sort for preferment, though of the sort, which, of all others, *ought*, peculiarly to recommend him to those, who are proud of patronage. Unfortunately, those, who

who are most worthy of support, are the last to seek it; and, when driven by absolute necessity, to take such a step, „The „modesty of merit,, is an almost insuperable bar, and renders them extremely awkward: and, it is equally unfortunate, that the worth of such characters is not easily comprehended, but by those, who possess the powers of delicate discrimination; and, believe me, we do not often find such powers distributed among the rich: for, riches, except in the hands of those, blessed with peculiar minds, are apt to blunt the finer feelings, and render them callous to the claims of genius.

It gives me no small pleasure to find, that Mr. K ——— 's desires are very limited, and that he does not regard the possession of talents, as an equivalent for every thing else. For, there are not a few men of
splen-

splendid abilities, who fancy that their attainments, entitle them to an exemption from labour, and the good things of this world. The assumption of improper consequence, and, too often, their intemperance, soon sap the foundations of their claims, and render them, at once, the pity and the admiration of mankind.

If I may judge from what I have observed, there is nothing of this kind to dread, in Mr. K ——— and, I am confirmed in this idea, by *your* solicitations in his behalf; for, I have ever regarded it, as one of the peculiar properties of my Felicia's mind, that it is formed to judge of character, with happy skill, and to distinguish, with the nicety of a casuist, between the real and pretended virtues, of either sex,

Something, therefore, must and shall be done for him. But I am averse to the mode you propose, that, of engaging in the party politics of the day, and dedicating his talents, to what can only, in my opinion, render them disreputable: for, though I grant, that an immediate subsistence, may be thus obtained, yet, there is something so narrow-minded, in the idea of party, and temper and talents are so frequently contracted, and ruined by the miserable jargon of politics, that I should think, the temporal advantages, resulting from the pursuit, by no means adequate to the sacrifice.

There is another awkward circumstance, attending a political writer, which is, that, however virtuous he may be in his principles, and however anxious in the establishment of truth, and the detection of error, he

he must, unless a man of fortune, be under the patronage of a party; and though, truth is immutable, party is not; and, if he means to reap any benefit from his labours, he will, probably, soon find the necessity of lacerating his feelings, by renouncing Truth, to follow his leaders; or, to renounce his leaders, and starve with Truth.

Yet, was it natural in you, my Felicia, to suppose that, an eligible pursuit for young K ——— because, you heard him speak with peculiar animation, against a set of men, for whom you entertain no favourable ideas. But his animation arose from a pure love of virtue, and a proper detestation of vice; and, it was plain to be seen, that he did not less despise the men, than their principles. And, I must confess, that I am not a little prejudiced in his favour; because he knows, how to give due praise,

to fascinating abilities, 'without being won, like the generality of young people, to give to such abilities the praise, due only to virtue.

For talents and minds like his, which cannot be made to bend to common modes of pursuit, and common modes of thinking, it is not easy to provide lucrative situations; but, as his desires are limited, and he has the good wishes of my Felicia, he can not possibly want any assistance, that can be rendered him by, her

FREDERICK

LET.

LETTER XXVI.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

The assurance given me, that you will interest yourself, on behalf of Mrs R ——— and Mr K ——— affords me great satisfaction.

I am much gratified in the perusal of a book, which, had you not sent it to me, I should never have thought of reading: *The Religio Medici*, of Sir Thomas Brown. The imputation thrown on physicians in general, that they are void of religion, Sir Thomas proves to be very unjust, in respect to him; and, it is with pleasure I find him, a strong advocate for those particular principles, of the Christian system, in which the world has of late, grown very lax.

That, to believe nothing, but what meets with the assent of human reason, or

which may be accounted for, upon given principles, is not *faith*, but mere *philosophy*; it is a just and beautiful position, giving us a proper sense of the imperfection of human nature, the transcendency of inspiration, and the divinity of our religion. The language of this treatise, is at once bold and fervent:.. and, with the arguments, shews, that the author, was fully and properly impressed with his subject. After him, the petty subtleties and distinctions, the nice - turned periods, and affected super-eminence of Hume, Bolingbrooke, and such writers, appear like the most flimsy efforts; and, instead of expanding, contract the ideas, and trammel the mind in a miserable system. Accept my thanks then, Frederick, for the treat you have given me, in this little book; and, be assured, that I shall read with great pleasure, whatever you recommend on the same subject: always
 regard-

regarding you as, „my guide, philosopher,
and friend!„ —

Adieu!

FELICIA.

LETTER XXVII.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

*I*s it not time, my Felicia, that we closed
our literary correspondence, by that union,
which is to establish the future felicity of
my life; and, I trust, of yours? — Con-
sider, my love, that life is but a summer's
day; and that it is a sin against heaven, to
neglect the rational enjoyments of it.

It is true, that our affairs are not yet
so arranged, as to enable us to shine in the

world of fashion; and that probably by procrastinating the day, „Which we two have sworn shall come to pass,„ we should acquire many advantages which we must at present resign. This consideration, I am aware, would have great weight with many. But, let us ask ourselves one simple question: Would *any* advantages whatever, which we may not now enjoy, essentially contribute to our happiness? — *My* heart answers in the negative: I feel that, possessed of my Felicia, and blessed with, „an elegant „in sufficiency,„ no other acquisition is necessary to my felicity. And, I am persuaded, that I so well know thy mind, as to answer for thee. I am firmly of opinion, that *my* ambition being satisfied, thine has nothing more to covet; especially, as the country is your favourite residence. As you are now enjoying that delight, which I know, rural scenery affords you, I conjure you
by

by all its pure pleasures, to lend an attentive and indulgent ear to my adjuration; and therefore — By the antic mansion, which shelters thee from the autumnal storm, that rocks the woods behind it: by those majestic and gloomy groves, which thy presence, has often rendered so infinitely more delightful, „Than all the cheerful „haunts of men:„ by that fair winding stream, on whose banks we have wandered, when the song of the thrush, has made us forgetful of all time: by the village church, which the beams of the setting sun render so delightful, from the ivy-surrounded window, when thou art probably, this moment, reading thy favourite, *The Fairie Queene* — but why should I enumerate all the beauties of nature, or charge thee by all that has made us happy? — By my affection, and thy own confidence in that affection — Be Mine!

I have seriously considered, my Felicia, all the advantages and disadvantages, of our immediate union; and, the disadvantages are such, as minds like ours, ought to despise: and, upon that principle, if no other, I trust to receive a favourable reply; for which, however, I shall personally wait upon thee, in a few days. Adieu!

FREDERICK.

LETTER XXVIII.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

The country is so delightful, and you have so true a relish for it, that I sincerely wish you were here: for, its beauties will speedily pass away; the leaves of the trees exhibit

hibit all the different degrees of shade, from a dark green to a complete yellow.

We have had a mighty silly woman of fashion here, to whom. „Larks and nightingales are odious things;„ but, who affects to be a great admirer of nature. She is really a very good judge of chintz patterns, and can tell when a white ground is decorated with taste; but, shew her an extensive prospect, she has no conception of the charms, by which it may be variegated: she has some notion of the beauties of art, but none at all of the sublime of nature.

It was unfortunately my lot, to accompany her ladyship in a ride, and to shew her, what *we* esteem elegancies. The watermill, which is so well situated at the bottom of a hanging wood, she took for a wash-

wash-house; and, thinking it too near the river, wondered the poor people were not drowned. The hanging wood, she would have cleared of timber, and covered with sheep: and then, repeated a line of Shenstone:

„My hills are white over with sheep.“

whence, she concluded, that *all* hills, ought to be covered with sheep: „And, you know, Miss Shenstone planned the Leasowes, and had an immense fine taste.“ —

„But then, does not your Ladyship see, that the hills, on the other side of the river, are beautifully green, and covered with sheep: and that the hanging wood forms a delightful contrast?“ — „Yes,

my dear: but, how much pleasanter would it have been for the opposite hills, to have been alike; and, for the sheep to have bleated to each other across the water!

„Now, if this seat were mine, I would

„down

„down with this hanging wood — and so,
 „I am sure would Shenstone., Her Lady-
 ship was equally averse to the rookery:
 „It was a shame to harbour such a quantity
 „of filthy noisy birds; besides, the trees
 „spoiled the back prospect of the house.,
 And that, you know, is a distant view of
 some lime — kilns, the smoke of which
 ascending a considerable height, and being
 seen over the wood, has a good effect.
 This I endeavoured to explain to her Lady-
 ship, but she said: „There was nothing
 „like having a clear view of the country;
 „and, as to the lime-kilns, they conveyed
 „an idea of the estate being productive of
 „profit!., —

This sagacious remark, reminds me of
 an observation made, by some such kind of
 lady, who, with a party, visited Mrs Clive,
 at her beautiful residence near Strawberry-
 Hill

Hill. Whilst the company were admiring the scenery around them, and expressed their pleasure at the beauty of the situation, which commands a view of Richmond-Hill, Mr. Pope's house, the Thames &c. Mrs — — was observed to fix her eye, with great pleasure, on a particular object: „What, my dear Madam,, said one of them to her, „what is it engages your attention, „that you seem in such a musing mood of „pleasure?,, — „I am thinking,, replied she, „what a charming hedge that is to dry clothes on!,,

On every favourite spot, from every favourite eminence, whence we have so frequently contemplated, the scenes around us, I could not but regret your absence, which, I assure you, the absurdity of Lady A — —'s remarks, rendered more irksome still: so, that you are more indebted to her, than

than you are aware; for, she has actually taught me, to fix a great value on your company.

Thus, I perceive, that in the country it is more requisite to associate, with those of congenial minds, than in town: for, it is a miserable thing, to be obliged to attend those, who have no sense of the pleasures, which surround them; and, how few are they, in the circle of our acquaintance, whose company in *this* situation, would be tolerable! I would much rather talk to an echo, than to those, who cannot understand me: and, live alone, in a hollow tree, than in a romantic castle, surrounded by such, as would tease one about the furniture being old-fashioned.

I am just favoured with your epistle, of adjuration and conjuration, to which, I
am

am happy that you do not require a *written* reply. You are very artful, to appeal to my philosophy, and to adjure me, by all that you know I so much esteem. But, I have reasons to assign, which, I trust, you will not attribute to caprice, or want of a proper sense of your merits, and my own happiness. More of this when we meet. Adieu!

FELICIA.

LETTER XXIX.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

The indisposition of my uncle K — which had been represented to me, as somewhat dangerous, has called me to this part of the country, and I now write to my
Feli-

Felicia from Nottingham. Mr K ———'s illness has a good deal subsided, and I shall return to town, in the course of a few days.

I am greatly pleased with the situation, and the inhabitants of this place: the former is delightful, and the latter are *debonnaire*. There is a frankness and urbanity about them, that peculiarly recommends them to strangers; very different from the *hauteur*, and affected pomposity of the M***** people, upon whom, I remember your writing an admirable satire, after our return from a dinner, to which we were invited, merely to be shewn a side-board of plate, and to hear by what exploits in trade, the possessor had become the rival of Lords, and the envy of those lesser gentry, who seem not sufficiently aware, of the vast superiority of hereditary honour, over all, that upstart grandeur and pecuniary splendour,

can bestow. I remember too, the severity of your remark, when, at that table, the conversation turning on the *vast advantages*, Miss M ——— had acquired in marrying one of the richest manufacturers in England, you said: „How much more to her honour „would it have been, had she married a „Gentleman.“ How the men, and, what is worse, how the *ladies* stared! Could any thing, verify your remark more, than the simple elegance and charming propriety, with which we were entertained by Mr W ——— who, being the younger son of an ancient family, and obliged, to have recourse to merchandise, had acquired wealth, and united the respectable characters, of a merchant and a gentleman? Thus, it is, that riches, more commonly degrade than exalt a character; and, so very few know to use them.

Among

Among the people of this town, generally speaking, there is a love of science; and, it is here a sort of fashion, to be elegant and well-bred; and a sort of disgrace, to be ignorant. Though it is a place of considerable manufacture, they have the skill to throw aside the trader, the moment they quit their counting-houses; and, their common conversation wants not the spice of literary anecdote, and scientific information.

At their public assemblies a stranger is not long a stranger; and, the impertinent and vulgar „Who is he?„ is scarcely heard here, except from an old lady or two, who have some daughters to dispose of, and are always forward enough, to procure one a partner in a country dance, by way of invitation, to more familiar intercourse.

The chief fault of the women here, is an excessive fondness for the *outré* of dress.

If you would behold the extravagance of fashion, go to Nottingham. There, impatience for new fancies, exceeds all belief; their taste, „runs riot:„ and, to convince the *Londoners*, that they can be even with them, they as far outstrip them in finery, as the glaring sun overpowers the pale splendour of the moon.

From the false taste, and outrageous appearance, one is apt to conceive ideas of these ladies, not very favourable to their private manners, which, however, are as full of decorum, and propriety, as those of their more stately neighbours, the good people of Derby, who, comparatively speaking, are a distant, reserved, formal set of people. The ladies dress with far less frippery, than those of Nottingham, but they are far less charming.

Excuse,

Excuse, my dear Felicia, those ramb-
ling observations. But as I can not prevail
on myself, to omit above a single post, to
pass without bringing you assurances of my
affection, so I am apt to fancy myself con-
versing with you, and, in my letters, to
exhibit little more than a fire-side con-
versation. Adieu! and believe me ever,
&c. &c.

LETTER XXX.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

The letters of Frederick, on whatever sub-
ject, are welcome. Your remarks on the
people of M ——— and N ——— convince me,
that every separate town, as well as every
separate country, and individual, has its ap-
propriate character. This, indeed, can not
be better exemplified, than, in the metro-

polis, where the small division of Temple-Bar, separates two as distinct people, as any civilized country can exhibit.

I envy you your country tour, though, I sincerely lament the cause. I had ever a grateful regard for Mr K ——— whom I remember in my early infancy, to have greatly endeared himself to me, by those little kindnesses, which never fail to win the hearts of children. A contemplation of his character, his unaffected goodness, simplicity of manners, and, perhaps, his just estimation, and predelection in favour of you, have made me conceive a very different opinion of an *old bachelor*, than is commonly entertained by our sex, of that description of yours. I hope he will live long enough, to see his favourite nephew Frederick, and his Felicia, as truly happy, as I am sure he wishes them.

If

If you visit my favourite retreat, fail not to date your letter from that retired summer-house, where your Felicia, passed many happy hours of her infancy and youth. Adieu!

LETTER XXXI.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

From her favourite retreat, I once more address my dear Felicia. But, believe me, that the scene, fills my mind too much with ineffectual wishes, to permit it to wander in the airy excursions of fancy, or to dictate on any other subject, than thy absence from a spot, where thou hast passed so many tranquil hours, and, where I am now passing some, of pleasing melancholy and fond regret. Yet, I will not dwell on this; but try to impart other ideas, and somewhat more

more general. When we revisit those scenes, to which we have been accustomed, in our early years, how apt are we, to contrast the happy ignorance of those days, with the knowledge we have obtained by an intercourse with the world! — and, how often do we vainly wish, to unlearn almost all that we have learned!

This is one good reason, why young people should be brought early forward into life; that they may soon be taught, what the world is; that they may have time to rectify the errors, mistaken notions are apt to occasion, and to repair, in manhood, those ruins of fortune, which sometimes attend, the impetuosities and follies of youth.

It is common to run into extremes, in matters of education, as well as any thing else: formerly, people kept their children
cooped

cooped up in their houses, or, at most permitted them to visit a neighbouring town, till Miss became a *gawky* of sixteen, and master, a *booby* of twenty; they were then shewn in the metropolis, and became the dupes of polished villany, and city knavery. Master, probably became a fat or a gamester, and Miss, a *fine lady*.

The country gentry, at length, discovered the folly of keeping their children in ignorance, to preserve them from vice; and, the opposite extreme is now adopted. Master, is scarcely in his teens, but he is taken to London, „to see life, and to know the „world;„ whilst his sister, is, at the same time, „to be introduced to genteel company;„ and, to be initiated in the principles of taste, — that is, the taste of a milliner and mantua-maker; and, to acquire the art of throwing off, „that prudent reserve,„ which

was heretofore reckoned very charming: and, to affect that unabashed behaviour, which was heretofore reckoned very odious. Master and Miss are too young to appear very awkward, and are soon as cunning, as fashionable, and as unprincipled as their patterns. They then return into the country, divested of all those better qualities, and that ingenuoufness, which endeared them to their neighbours, who, after this enviable change, regard them with suspicion, or secret detestation, whilst the more ignorant, bow to them, as prodigies of fashion and fine breeding! Thus, these young folks, are wise too soon: they have the superstructure without the foundation; and, are thought the graces, before they know any thing of principles. The country is overrun with this species of gentry, which serve only to bring the better sort, into disrepute, and make themselves ridiculous. They are,
how-

however, somewhat better than the former pair, who have the misfortune to become wife too late.

When I reflect, how different is she, whose mind was nurtured in these shades, and who, in this silent retreat, imbibed principles, the most noble, and taste the most just; my heart glows with delight that I know her: and, with felicity and gratitude, that she will be mine! — Hasten, my dear Felicia, the transporting day, that shall give you to the future protection of

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXII.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

In answer to your entreaties, respecting the day, that is to terminate our present,
cor-

correspondence, I can only refer you to my father, not only as an act of duty, but as to the only person now left, who is at all interested in the fate of your Felicia. And, though, I know his favourable opinion of Frederick, yet, I am aware of an objection, that will be made on his part, which is the chance of my aunt D —— withdrawing her favour, whose favourite, at present, I am; and, indeed, though we have sufficient, to satisfy rational desires, it would be unpleasant to my father, to suppose, that the property of my aunt, should be left from the family, especially, as she has no relatives in being.

The only reason which I entertain, for supposing my aunt D —— may possibly prove averse, to my union with Frederick, does not arise from any preconceived prejudice, which she may have imbibed respecting

ing

ing you, but, from her general opinion of the young men of these days. She, like most people in years, has the idea, strongly impressed on her mind, that the age is much degenerated; and, every young man, who has about him any thing of fashion, is with her, a profligate. So, that I fancy, we should find it extremely difficult, perhaps impossible, to please her, in this respect, at all.

I can not, by any means, find myself offended, by this prejudice of my aunt, when I reflect, that her own husband, was one of the most moral and accomplished gentleman of his time; and, though, my aunt's marriage was clandestine, and, her adventures, previous to it, some what singular, as I will relate to you in a subsequent letter, yet, it must be confessed, that Sir William D — was a sufficient apology
for

for almost any conduct, that could not, but terminate honourably and happily, to all parties.

I believe, the only way to gain her concurrence will be, to make her insensibly, as it were, acquainted with your merits. I am sure, your mind is such, as must captivate her; and you have enough of the last age about you, to win her heart, provided, an opportunity can be found, to convince her of it. This can not be, but by frequent intercourse; and, as she visits at most of the places we mutually frequent, I do not see, that it will be any hard task on you, to pay her those attentions, which, from the young, are always flattering to the old.

Your mind, Frederick, is too liberal and too good, to misinterpret any thing, that I have said on this occasion. I wish
not

not to play the coquette, or to feign the indifference I do not feel, respecting the subject of your repeated sollicitations: and, it is surely better, than have conduct attributed to mistaken, perhaps, to criminal motives, to be candid on all occasions, where it is safe to be candid, which, can only be with minds, equally endued with that amiable quality. On the contrary, candour shewn to low, suspicious, and illiberal minds, is usually productive of repentance, or ruin, to those, who, void of guile, expose themselves to the misconstructions of ignorance, or the artful designs of the vicious. But, there is little reason for my dreading the effects of my candour to you, or my assuring you, that I am, with all truth and sincerity.

Yours, &c. &c.

LET-

LETTER XXXIII.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

A Thousand and a thousand acknowledgments, are due to my dear Felicia, for her last kind letter, as well for the promise of the circumstances, relating to Mrs D ——'s marriage, as of the charming candour of my most amiable Felicia, in pointing out any mode, that may tend to the acceleration of that day, which is to seal most happiness.

This is the last letter I shall address from the retreat, in the neighbourhood of which, I have met with a character, that ought to be known to you. You remember a Mr S —— who, about a year ago, published some poems, which, I recollect, you admired. I came into conversation with him, by mere accident. He has lodgings at an obscure farm-house, some distance from the village; and, I have learned from him,
 what

what it is to possess taste, and to be an inhabitant of the country. To poets, you know, rural scenes form an elysium. But, what were elysium itself, without society? Adam found no bliss in paradise, till a being was produced, who could share his felicity. And, I think, every man with a refined taste, in the country, is in a more miserable state, than was Adam, who had sometimes the advantage of angelic intercourse. The country, then, as described by the poets, certainly, besides their fictitious favourites, must not be supposed destitute of accomplished mortals, capable of receiving and of communicating, mental pleasures.

Mrs S ——— has just property enough, to live decently in a remote situation *from*, and to starve upon, *in* London; for, I call it starving in London, if you can not mix with those, who have taste, congenial with your own; and, if you can not join in the

ments of the metropolis, it is, of all places, the most miserable. I sincerely pity this gentleman, who seems formed to embellish society, diffuse elegance, and enliven conversation. Yet, it is his fate, to be buried in obscurity.

„And find no spot of all the world, his own.“

Not perceiving any shadow, of even that society, which is falsely called: „Genteel company,“ in the neighbourhood, and, having read in some wise author, Aristotle, I think, that, „to bear absolute solitude, „a man must be either an angel, or a savage.“ I could not but conceive highly of Mr S — and took the liberty of asking, in what manner he passed his time. „Dully enough,“ said he, „though, I endeavour to fancy myself as happy, as my brother wits in London think me. And, had I but society, „I should really be so: but, the only person to whom I can speak, above five min-

„utes

„nutes at a time, is the person of the parish, with whom I generally part, in dudgeon, as we mostly disagree, either on matters of literature, or his own conduct, which, as a priest, I think very exceptionable, and that simply, from inattention to every thing, but the discharge, and the mere discharge, of his public duties. I love a man, to display some alacrity in his profession, be it what it will; and, nothing shocks me more, than to find a clergyman attending his church, for the sole purpose of enabling him to attend his *banker*. But, pardon me,, continued he, „you were inquiring as to the manner in which I pass my time. As I rise late, for, I can not altogether leave of my London habits, I mostly find a morning paper on my breakfast table, which murders an hour, you know, in the true sense of the word. Fair weather, induces a ride, and foul weather,

„makes books or writing very welcome;
 „and, one of these amusements, fills the time
 „till dinner. But, I have found, that a
 „man is never rightly at ease, unless he is
 „engaged in the service of society, however,
 „little he may have to do with it, and every
 „man *feels*, that it is a sin to be idle. I
 „have, therefore, engaged myself in a liter-
 „ary undertaking, and, by fancying myself
 „under promises to a bookseller, I find myself
 „constrained to labour, and have actually
 „written, two volumes of an entire new
 „species of Novel, which, I intend to com-
 „prise, in three. And, this is not from
 „any desire, of either fame or emolument,
 „because, neither the one nor the other,
 „resulting from a work of this kind, can
 „much advantage me: but, purely to pre-
 „serve me from the sin of idleness.

„Well, Sir, at dinner, I am always
 „accompanied by Farmer Gibson, and his
 „father,

„father, a fine old silver-headed man, who
 „remembers the death of Queen Anne, and,
 „having been a great reader of public papers,
 „all his life-time, is quite a chronicle, and
 „perfectly amusing in his accounts, of the
 „political ideas that prevailed, at different
 „periods, among men of his own class. —
 „Baker's Chronicle, is his favourite book;
 „and, I believe, he can repeat every mar-
 „vellous story in it. This, except the par-
 „son, is the only literary companion I have;
 „and, he is the best of the two; for, he
 „never tells a thing twice over.”

„The afternoon, presently passes in wal-
 „king, reading, or writing; and, in the
 „evening, I play on the violin, till the
 „house is retired to rest, which never ex-
 „ceeds nine o'clock, and then, surrounded
 „by universal silence, I can pursue, with
 „uninterrupted pleasure, my literary task,
 „which I usually do, till two or three in

„the morning. Such, is the life I lead,
 „which is at least inoffensive; and it is not
 „my fault, it is not more useful. In trade,
 „which I abhor, I should probably lose,
 „what little I have; and, without turning
 „my hand to something,, as the phrase is,
 „I can not enjoy the mode of life, best
 „suited to my talents and my wishes.,,

Such, my dear Felicia, is Mr S — 's account of his time. I believe, you did not know, that you had so rational, I may say elegant, a neighbour in your retreat, which he greatly admires and to which, by my direction, he is, hereafter, to have free access; and, may he, in the groves of — Lodge, find the muses propitious!

Pardon this long letter, which is meant as an introduction of Mr S — to your better acquaintance, who, when my Felicia is here, will no longer regret his absence from, „his brother wits in London., — Adieu!

LETTER XXXIV.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

And thanks to *you*, Sir, for your account of Mr S ——— whose verses I remember to have admired, and shall doubtless continue to admire, when I read them again, which shall be, before, I see the author.

By your account, he must have a good heart, as well as pleasing qualities. And, that report must have injured him, which represented him as very imprudent, if not a debauchee; though, I do not recollect, that any thing particular was alledged against him, but, that he was poor; and, with the illiberal and unfeeling, poverty, we all know, is a crime, not so easily pardoned, as the most bare-faced villany, provided it be successful.

Poverty implies indiscretion; and, it is said, that no man that will work, need want. But, this is a fallacious doctrine. Many cir-

cumstances may concur, to prevent him receiving the reward of his labour. The public however, make no allowance for circumstances; and, I once heard Mr F ——— reproved for his necessities by Lady T ——— who said: „It was a shame, that, a man „*of his talents* should want any thing.” Lady T ——— had been asked to lend him a hundred pounds without which, F ———’s talents were just of as much use as a piece of ground to a man, who has nothing to sow.

Can nothing be done for poor S ——— It is a great pity. that such talents should

„*Waste their sweetnesss on the desert air.*”

I should think, *your* interest might procure him, something congenial to his feelings; and, now I think of it, I will impose on you the task to oblige me: and, I hope you are, „a knight too true and loyal to your betrothed fair,” to receive my commands lightly. There is infinite pleasure,

in

in providing for the worthy; and, I am sorry, that fashion constrains me to dispose, of not a little, to those, who are no apology for benevolence. The most deserving, are the most retired: who would think of going to Farmer Gibson's for a man, who, to use your own words, „is formed to embellish „society, diffuse elegance, and enliven conversation,„ For heaven's sake, let us hear no more of such a man being confined, to the table and conversation of Farmer Gibson, who, by the way, is a tenant of my father's, and a favourite to boot: for, to the old man's Baker, my father adds Hollingshead and Stowe, and, it is absolutely a feast, to hear the venerable old man talking of ancient times, in a calm summer evening, under the shade of a sycamore. — But, adieu! you will think I am seized with the garrulity of old age, and rejoice that you are not near; and, though I would not mind *talk-*

ing out your patience, I am too idle to exercise it any more by *writing*; and, so „hop-
 „ing these lines will find you,, — disposed
 to provide for Mr S — and to see us soon, I
 remain &c.

LETTER XXXV.

FREDERICK to FELICIA.

The confidence, which my Felicia reposes
 in her Frederick, render her, if possible, still
 more dear to me. You were ever lovely
 and amiable: now you are generous; and,
 yours is that kind of generosity, not com-
 mon among your sex, who, from an affecta-
 tion of delicacy, and, it is indeed mere af-
 fection, too frequently forfeit their own
 happiness, and that of their lovers too, by
 studiously and ridiculously avoiding, what-
 ever can tend to express their nearest wish-
 es, on the subject of the most important
 day of their lives.

Yet,

Yet, it is well, perhaps, that the generality of women should be so; for, better is it to be thus, than to afford the smallest idea, that might tax them with indelicacy, or want of discretion; and, how few can, like my Felicia, express themselves with frankness, ease, and elegance united!

I hope it will give thee pleasure to find, that, respecting Mrs D — my wishes are anticipated. She thinks as favourably of me, even as thou couldst wish, and, in her, therefore, I shall meet with no obstructions, to the accomplishment of my happiness. This I have learned from Lady F — who, in the casual course of conversation, informed me of the venerable lady's predilection in favour of him, who trusts, that he may now solicit thy hand; and hopes, that the day is not far distant, which shall commence that felicity I have so ardently expected, and
which

which is to prove, the chief solace and comfort of my remaining life.

That nothing may remain undone, which can, in the least, tend to the satisfaction of my Felicia, I have already exerted myself in behalf of Mr S ——— and think I have written enough, to interest those in his favour, whose single word may provide for him most amply. To this, indeed, I wanted no spurring: and should have thought it hard, if, among the variety, for whom I am daily solicited, and am, in some measure, obliged to provide, I could not gratify my own heart, in establishing, as he ought to be, a man of worth and talents. The command of my Felicia, has therefore, endeared her more; it shows that she can properly appreciate character, and generously reward merit; and, flattering myself, that I have a similarity of sentiment and conduct, I can not but assure myself of our mutual felicity.

No-

Nothing can detain me longer in the country; and, I quit with delight, a retreat made sacred by thy infancy, and, in which, my dear Felicia, has, I doubt not, many years of happiness to come. — Never before, left I, without regret, the rural scene for the turbulence of the metropolis, which, as long as it contains thee, is the residence of the muses, and the graces, of beauty, and of harmony. Adieu!

LETTER XXXVI.

FELICIA to FREDERICK.

It gives me some pleasure to find, that Frederick has a mind, capable of distinguishing between those actions, which flow from a decided character, and those, which are the spontaneous effects of the moment. And, previous to any further communication between us, I wish him to understand, that the conduct, which has met with his approbation, as an appreciation of character, and

a protection of merit, has, not unfrequently, been stigmatized as a passion for patronage, guided only by chance, and, the too prudent have censured it, as if it were akin to vice.

You, my dear Frederick, having „similarity of sentiment and conduct,“ will excuse me, if, I am rather particular on this subject. So far from restraining, I do not expect that you will censure me, in pursuing a conduct, which may sometimes demand more pecuniary aid, than *reasonable* people think necessary to bestow, on any but themselves. On this, *We* must perfectly understand each other. Excuse me then, if I, somewhat strongly, say, that I hold in contempt, not to say abhorrence, that miserable spirit of charity, which, in some cases, consults only its own importance, and in others, the exact extent, which will secure to it, human approbation. What is it, if I relieve a family from pining distress, without taking means, to prevent their immediately replunging into the same state? — What is it but insulting them, with woes, similar to those of Tantalus? — What, but showing them the promised land, yet leaving them lingering in the vale of tears?

tears? Like those wretched daughters of delusion, whom heavenly charity snatches from disease and death, and whom her delegates too often relinquish to their former calamities. This stinted relief, may be charity, and may be the effect of a good heart, and where no more *can* be done, is worthy of a heavenly recompense. But, without pretending to a better disposition than others, this contents not me; because, I have known several instances, in which it has proved more fatal than beneficial. If you leave that incompleated by charity, which necessity calls for, you open the door of temptation: as riches increase riches, so poverty engenders poverty; and they, who have nothing but misfortune, and merit, to recommend them, are too often spurned by the ignorant and assuming, and reduced to situations, which every mind is not calculated to bear. These considerations will always induce me, to follow the object of my compassion, till all is done that is needful; and, this conduct, I once more tell you, has been stigmatized sometimes with imprudence, and sometimes with hypocrisy; and, as it is a conduct, from which I *never* will depart, I wish you to be perfectly re-
con-

conciled to it; or the state, in which you are solicitous to enter, may not prove so felicitous, as your imagination paints it, or, as your good qualities deserve — — — —

Cetera desunt.

REMARK:

The above concludes the correspondence between the lady and gentleman, to whom the names of *Felicia* and *Frederick* have been given. There is no more of it come to my hands; and, from the tenour of the latter part of it, a conclusion may be fairly drawn, that a matrimonial alliance ensuing directly upon it, terminating this instructive and entertaining correspondence.

The Editor.



Original letters

Altona 1797

Epist. 648

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